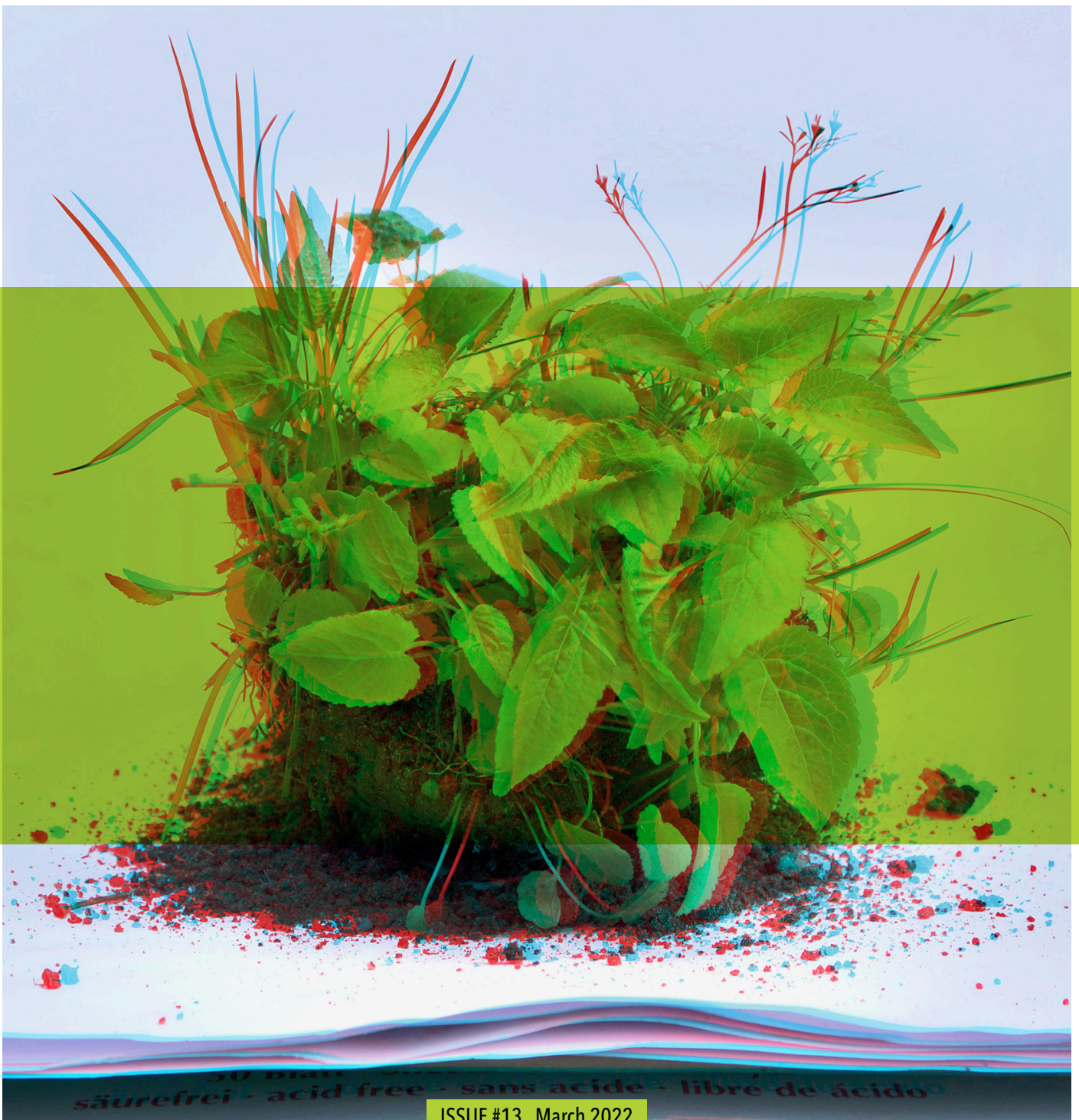


CONTEMPORARY

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International Art Magazine

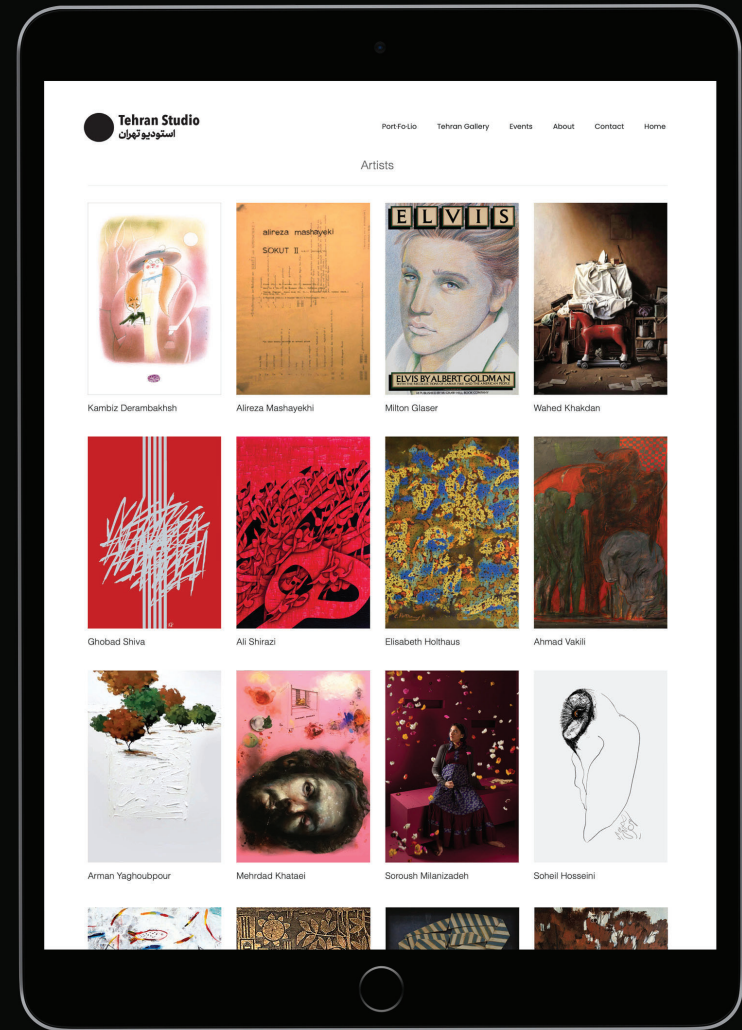
Lexi Arrietta | Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim | Yelda Kullap | Salah Missi | Serena Perrone
Zygmunt Piotrowski | Nathaniel Rackowe | Gopa Roy | Peter Wüthrich | Charlotte 4B | Timo Kahlen



ISSUE #13 March 2022

Contemporary art will never achieve the audience of football, pop music, or television, so I think we should stop comparing its possible area of influence to that of big mass-media events.

Maurizio Cattelan



www.tehranstudio.com/tehran-gallery/
For further information please email us at:
info@contemporaryidentities.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Art Writers:

Izmer Bin Ahmad
Anna Guillot
Tima Jam
Sophie Kazan
Lenka Piper
Zoltán Somhegyi

Editors:

Sara Berti
Elham Shafaei

Art Director:

Soheil Hosseini
tehranstudio.com

Layout:

Fariba Rahdar

Front Cover:

Timo Kahlen
Isolation (Carte Blanche), 2022
Six photographic works on
construction fence banners.
Intervention in public space
in times of pandemic isolation and
social distancing (Detail),
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Media Consultant:

Emad Pournasiri



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EDITORS' NOTE

The past few years were not easy for most of us but we are all facing it together. Apart from the pandemic, the wind of war does not help young and old to trust in the world as we would like it to be. We believe through Art we can reflect on the possibilities of a good evolution. through the Arts, man shows the critical points and the potentialities of his being and projects our thoughts and our hopes beyond.

We're delighted to celebrate the fourth anniversary of ContemporaryIdentities. As always, the essence of our pitch in CI is the link between contemporary artists and art writers to feature their creative practice. The energy and enthusiasm of our team, artists and writers move us forward to begin a new year. So, we would like to thank everyone involved in this edition.

Issue 13 features an interview with Timo Kahlen a German sound sculptor and media artist. He is known for his sound sculptures and site-specific sound art works, installations with steam, wind and light, as well as experimental net art, video and photography. His interdisciplinary and intermedia body of work, often employing ephemeral, elemental materials such as wind and steam, light and shade, sound and vibration, noise and beauty, has been nominated for the German national Sound Art Prize 2006, the Kahnweiler Prize for Sculpture 2001 and the Prize for Young European Photographers 1989, as well as various scholarships in Washington D.C., Berlin, Paris and Guernsey.

We would like to appreciate the participation of our artists and art writers. In addition to our board members, we also had the pleasure of working with international guest writers such as Anna Guillot (Italy), Tima Jam (Iran-UK), Lenka Piper (Czech Republic), and Sophie Kazan (UK). We are also thankful to our joined design team sponsored by Studio Tehran for their hard work and effort.

Take care everyone
Sara Berti & Elham Shafaei

Lexi Arrietta

USA Izmer
Bin Ahmad



A Better Place, Now, 2021, Soiled doily, thorns and carved branches of wild rose, earth, wood, nails, glue, 15.5" x 13" x 7"



A Better Place, Now, Detail



Learning to Braid by My Mother's Hair, 2021, Driftwood, braided sisal fiber, plaster, oil, pigment, 38" x 23" x 34"

Lexi Arrietta takes us to the edge of the forest where humanity and wilderness meet, where manufactured things are abandoned to their uncultivated life. Arrietta understood these melancholic objects as metaphors for the mind that has been de-socialized through trauma, feral and thriving in solitude. The result is a braiding lesson evidenced by a wooden remnant, its contour smoothed by neglect, holding a timely blonde braid that mindfully descends into an earthenware, resigning into its own circularity. Another piece titled A Better Place, Now emerges from dead thorny twigs that fill-in the civilized punctures on skin-like cotton fabric. In both cases, nature serves as 'mimetic model' for an artistic practice that palliates trauma, grief, and estrangement. At society's edge is the earthly depth of the woods, where organic life feeds and violates one another without virtue or vice. The process of art is the shield that reveals that frailty, the anima that inaugurates the reach from one organism towards another -the Will to Life which consumes all otherness through love and sacrifice.

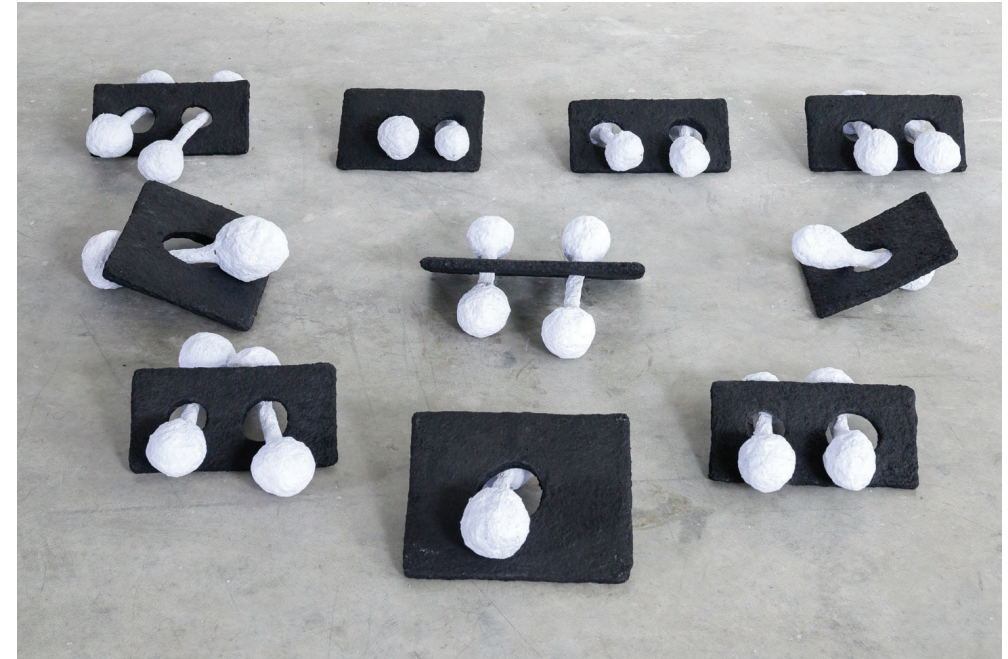
Mohamed A. Ibrahim

UAE
Sophie
Kazan



Khorfakkan, 2005, Cardboard, papier-mâché, wood, Variable Dimensions (each)

The colorful shapes and interlocking sculptures that make up the installation 'Khorfakkan' by artist Mohamed Ahmed Ibrahim bring to life the shapes, colors and textural experiences, history and memories of the landscape around his home. A native of Khorfakkan, a city located in the mountain region of the United Arab Emirates, Ibrahim's artistic practice sees him responding through paint, mixed media sculptures and installations to his environment. The colorful and tactile forms and



Khorfakkan, 2005, Cardboard, papier-mâché, wood, Variable Dimensions (each)

patterning are irresistibly accessible. They are both inviting and interactive, as objects and shapes, as a cluster and in relation to the viewer; inviting him or her to experience and be inspired by the very same views, textures and experiences. Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim's work will be shown in an exhibition entitled, Mohamed Ahmed Ibrahim: Between Sunrise and Sunset at the UAE Pavilion this year, during the 59th International Art Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia, 23 April - 27 November 2022.

Yelda Kullap

Turkey | Zoltán Somhegyi



The artist with her work, 2019

Yelda Kullap's works invite the viewer to reflect on the intricate and often even contradictory nature of happiness. On the pieces – or, better to say: in the pieces – we see old family photographs, however the figures are difficult to properly observe, since they are covered with the red-colored candy. The hard sugar thus becomes not only a frame, but a strong cage for the photographic image, obscuring it and making it unattainable. However, the essence of this covering material reminds us of the sweet memories that may fade with time, just like the transient moments of happiness fleet, often leaving behind only vague and blurred outlines of impressions.



Candy, 2019, Sugar, lemon and food coloring, 30x30 cm



Candy, 2019, Sugar, lemon and food coloring, 30x30 cm

Salah Missi

Lebanon | Lenka
Piper



Collective Depression no.2, 2021 - Gouache on paper, 100x70 cm



Endless Loop no.1, 2019, Charcoal on Paper, 150x150 cm

Salah Missi is a Lebanese architect and artist. His experience in architecture is evident in his paintings, where three dimensional objects are trapped in a two-dimensional environment. Closer inspection of the objects reveals human bodies depicted in black and shades of grey, who are deprived of their surroundings by a contrasting light background. Moreover, the secluded figures are hiding their faces from the viewer or are displayed in a mass of bodies, which prevents them from making a connection with the viewer. Such composition deprives the figures of individuality and presents them as objects. The figures portrayed in 'a state of helplessness and despair' provoke strong emotions that refer to the loss of belief in humankind and the environment.



Cluster no.1, 2021, Gouache on paper, 30x30 cm

Serena Perrone

USA-Italy | Tima
Jam



Smarrimento/Apparizione, excerpt, Image, diptych from series of photographs, Dimensions, TBD, Digital prints, sequential series to become folio of prints, Maiolica tile prototypes, site-specific installation and photo-documentation, 2021., Editing in-progress, yet to be published, printed or exhibited

Serena Perrone (b. 1979, St. Louis, Missouri) is an American multidisciplinary artist with an emphasis on printmaking. After graduating from the Rhode Island School of Design with an MFA in Printmaking, she lived in Philadelphia and New York for several years before relocating to Atlanta in 2019. Growing up with an Italian father and an American mother, Perrone split her time between Italy and the US, which has greatly influenced her work. Her work is a cross-disciplinary exploration of these sites of personal significance, focusing on landscapes and traditions from both countries. Perrone's work has been exhibited widely across the United States and is a fixture in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Library of Congress and several other notable institutions. She is currently Assistant Professor at Georgia State University and is the co-creator and Director of Officina Stamperia del Notaio, an international multi-disciplinary artists' residency program and printmaking studio in Sicily.



Smarrimento/Apparizione, excerpt, Image, diptych from series of photographs, Dimensions, TBD, Digital prints, sequential series to become folio of prints, Photographs 2019-2020. Editing in-progress, yet to be published, printed or exhibited



Smarrimento/Apparizione, excerpt, Image, diptych from series of photographs, Dimensions, TBD, Digital prints, sequential series to become folio of prints, Photographs 2019-2020. Editing in-progress, yet to be published, printed or exhibited

Zygmunt Piotrowski

Poland | Anna
Guillot



Modlitwa, 2000, the cover with, one page folded, 15 x 12.5 cm, limited edition of 300 pieces, Groundwork / Fine Art, Warsaw, Poland



Modlitwa, 2000, the cover with, one page folded, 15 x 12.5 cm, limited edition of 300 pieces, Groundwork / Fine Art, Warsaw, Poland

Zygmunt Piotrowski since the 1980s has introduced a new idea of collaboration, defined as "Aufmerksamkeitsschule", in the field of European performance, establishing the basis of the Black-Market International movement of which he is co-founder. From the 1990s onward, he has worked outside of the institutional framework of the art market under the name of Noah Warsaw. Since 1998 he has promoted "Groundwork/Fine Art", an area of research that takes him towards oriental sources, within which he explores visions of invisible spaces and extrasensorial perceptions, developing his dream of beauty through an inflexible discipline. Zygmunt-Noah studies the breathing, the control of body and face that he knows how to manage excellently. In the books "The body sublime and Beauty revelation" of 2014, he does this through drawing and with notes in Hebrew, his beloved language. But he also investigates breathing under threat, possible poisoning, as in "Modlitwa, prayer to the Virgin crowned with thorns", of 2000, taken from "Project Stalker", begun in 1989, wherein he presents his own vision of the Chernobyl disaster in tune with Andriej Tarkowski.



Auschwitz-Birkenau, performance, January 2010, photo-documentation by Bruno Maria Neumann OH, Courtesy the Artist

Nathaniel Rackowe

UK Sophie
Kazan



Installation courtesy of Fold Gallery: www.foldgallery.com/artist/nathaniel-rackowe/
Situating at: Riverside Walk Gardens, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1P 4RL



"Folly" is an installation by visual artist Nathaniel Rackowe, that stands beside the river Thames in London. Rackowe graduated from the prestigious Slade School of Fine Art and he has taken part in numerous international exhibitions and residencies, including a residency in Beirut in 2009. "Folly" is built of timber and bitumen and it explores the notion of personal spaces and material environments. Folly means a faux 'ruined castle,' that is beautiful yet deceptive. Here, the black shed appears static and imposing, until you realise there is a similar shed above its bright yellow roof.

"The idea of a rectangular form with yellow 'bites' taken out of it, as if the form had been unpicked came to me around the time that I got back from Beirut," Rackowe explains. "I had been thinking about spaces, alternative spaces and belonging. Here, the shed's usual function is questioned or negated."

Gopa Roy

India | Izmer
Bin Ahmad



Secure (un) Secure, Land art, Bird eye view, 2021



Secure (un) Secure, Land art, 2021, Details

We have marked the earth from the very beginning, turning its physical manifestation into signs and meanings, the coming of spring as well as scent of predators. We delineate sacred grounds and forbidden places, attaching ourselves to some and removing from others. Gopa Roy re-affirms this primordial binding to territoriality. Site-specific earthwork is the practice through which she develops physical and psychological connection with nature and its social inhabitants, an exercise in mindfulness by being absorbed in nature and land. Secure (un) Secure is a location where the artist cultivates these commitments. She isolates and fences the space within which selected plant species that had been long tamed and cultured by humans are further controlled, aestheticized, and offered for yet another field of consumption. These paddy and mung bean penetrate the soil beneath and shoot towards the sky where prayers are often kept, mapping and flagging the community beneath it.



Angeli di Cimiano, 2005, Offset Printed, Assab One, 24.5x18.5 cm, Milan, Italy, Courtesy KoobookArchive



Angeli di Cimiano, 2005, Photo, Courtesy KoobookArchive



The Angels of the World, MAC Musée d'Art Contemporain, Marseille, France

Peter Wüthrich has elected to use the book as his principal expressive instrument. "The Angels of the World", an itinerant and ongoing project by Peter Wüthrich, has involved international metropolises over the arc of almost 20 years, conveying their peculiarities and their most disparate features, setting it up as a singular way of redeeming the idea of "non-place". The space-place of Wüthrich's photographic set, which translates itself in the images of his books and in some cases in videos, is often an urban one. In Milan, IT, in the multi-ethnic neighbourhood of Cimiano, Wüthrich invited passers-by to become angels through the books, transforming the bearer of the book into a vehicle of knowledge and imagination. Thanks to the simple device of an open book worn like a pair of wings on their shoulders, the youngsters of Cimiano became messengers, guides, winged protectors. The book thus converts itself into a metaphor and becomes a vehicle of communication and a symbolic and real instrument. For Cimiano the photographs and the book that comes out of them speak of diversity and integration with a light and smiling language and in certain respects they recall the images of any large metropolitan periphery. Peter Wüthrich's mission, always the same but different in new cities with new actors and identities, can be considered as an opposite response to Baumanian thought.

Charlotte 4B

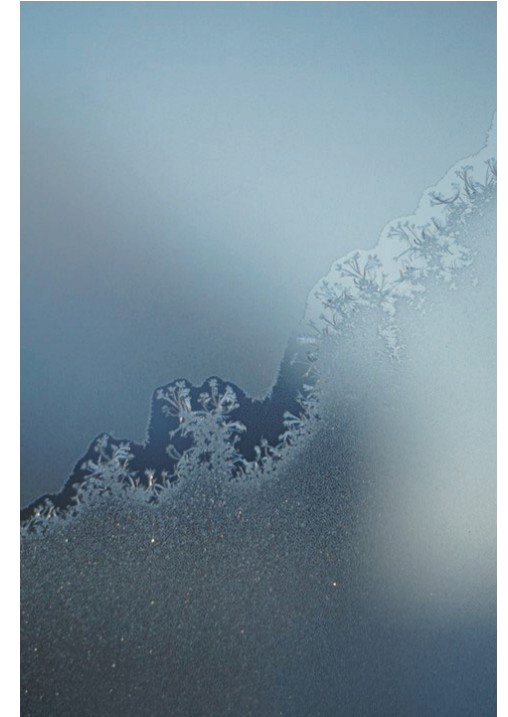
France | Lenka
Piper



HEMIFRÅN, 2021, Photo-book, Published by Corridor Éléphant Editions Limited edition, 21x15 cm approx.
<https://www.corridorelephant.com/charlotte4b>



HEMIFRÅN, OMVÄXLING, [VARIATION], Jukkasjärvi, Swedish Lapland, 2021, Photo-book, Published by Corridor Éléphant Editions Limited edition, 21x15 cm approx.

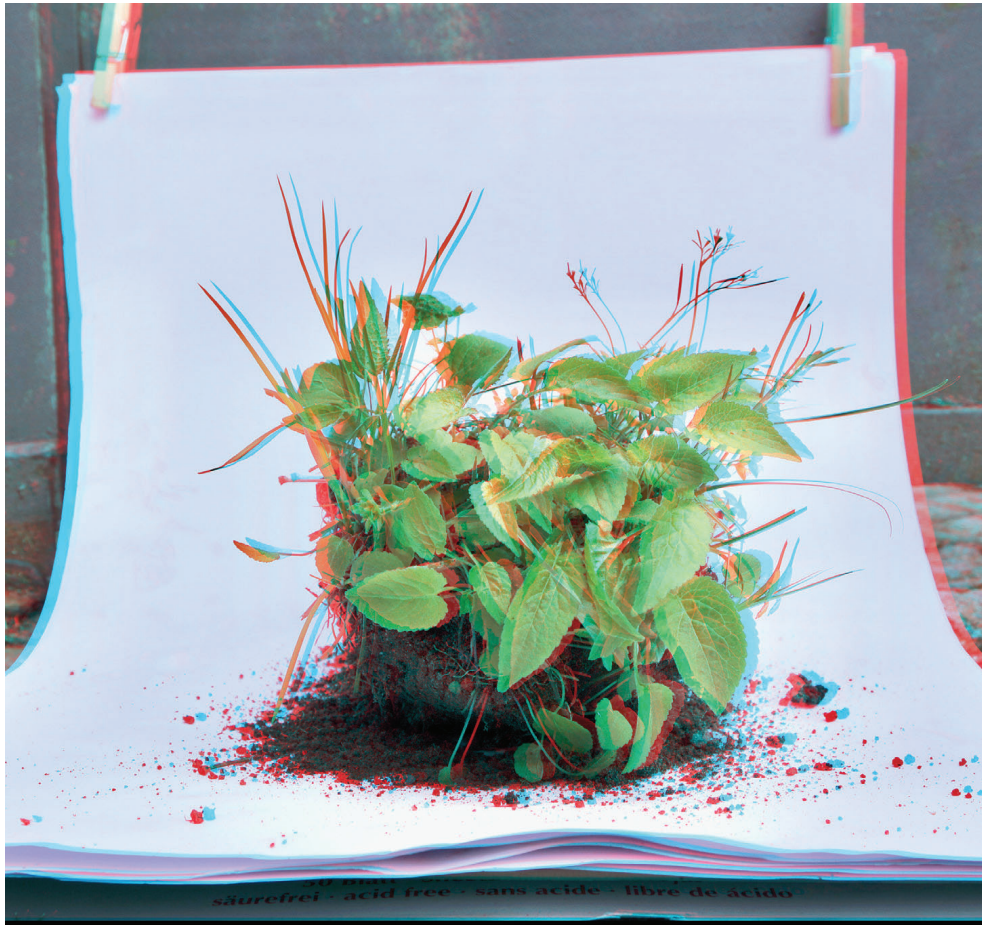


HEMIFRÅN, FRIOMRÅDE [Free Zone], Linköping, Sweden, 2021, Photo-book, Published by Corridor Éléphant Editions Limited edition, 21x15 cm approx.

Windows represent the main theme in Charlotte's artwork. They symbolise both a physical border and a philosophical limit: the opposite between inside and outside, the known and the unknown. The symbolic contrast is amplified by the formal contrast of light and shadows, textures, colours and shapes that are significant components of the photographs. Windows obscured by ice and condensation distort the view and refer to a cultural barrier: the multiplicity of perception influenced by factors including knowledge, language, culture and the emotions. Charlotte's artwork reflects the changeability of identity and presents the transparent.

Timo Kahlen

Interview



Isolation (Carte Blanche), 2022 from: Raseenstücke, Six photographic works on construction fence banners. Intervention in public space in times of pandemic isolation and social distancing (Detail), © VG Bild-Kunst

CI: Please introduce yourself.

TK: I was born in Berlin in 1966 and shipwrecked and survived in the Pacific, near the Galapagos Islands, in 1980. In the following years, I studied (and taught) fine arts with experimental photographer and filmmaker Dieter Appelt at the Hochschule der Künste Berlin (now University of the Arts). For the past 30 years, I have gained a reputation as a conceptual media artist and sound sculptor working with the ephemeral: with wind and steam, with light and shade, with pixels and dust, with sound, noise and vibration. Works with haptic, touchable sound and vibration, with fleeting light and shadow, with the swirling movement of invisible air, with wind and storm, or with touch-sensitive, now vanished images and sounds on the web are characteristic of my approach.

CI: What art do you most identify with?

TK: My works, which are often time-based and conceptual, evolve from small and fleeting, site-specific observations, from unintentional encounters or moments of chance that I experience in my environment, often in nature or within the time-specific cultural contexts of our times. My main method is to work from what I find, then to reduce the experimental setting to very few, absolutely essential elements (discarding all that is unnecessary), and - in the process - to make intentional and productive mistakes, adding moments of irritation and surprise. Doing so, I often find that I am able to capture the essence of our human existence. That said, it is obvious that I enjoy conceptual and minimalistic works of art (such as Arte Povera or Land Art) with strong references to nature, to our environment and the fragile human condition.

CI: Tell us about your earliest influences.

TK: I've been learning about art, and creating and exhibiting own works for more than 30 years now, initially focussing on and inventing new forms of experimental photography (such as Phosphorus Photography in 1987), then developing a long series of Works with Wind, acoustic and kinetic site-specific installations based on the currents of artificial wind produced by electrical fans, and simultaneously experimenting with the acoustic, kinetic, and tangible qualities of the sounds created. This led to first conceptual sound sculptures and multi-channel sound installations in the late 1980s and early 1990s, to my series of radiophonic compositions, and to the interactive works of sound art/net art from 2005 to today. To give an example: In the multi-channel sound sculpture SWARM, 2008, I created an agitated, alert swarm of bee sounds that floated, meandered and struck out from a monumental (8 meter long) metal block suspended - as if floating - a few inches above the ground, and induced the surface of the sculpture to vibrate and hum, as visitors approached the object. I installed this sound sculpture for the 'Scenarios' exhibition at MANIFESTA 7 Biennial (Italy, 2008) in the courtyard of the 19th century military fortress of Fortezza, blocking the visitor's entrance to the main exhibition of sound art beyond. Looking back, I believe that also VITRINE, 1991, one cubic meter of an (invisible) storm, only perceptible by the furious sound and the strong vibration of the surface of the transparent glass display case, in which it was enclosed, a work exhibited as part of my Works with Wind solo exhibition founding

and initiating the KUNST-WERKE BERLIN, in June 1991, was quite influential. Both of these works developed out of an observation of nature, less from a reflection of the art scene.

CI: Tell us about your current practice.

TK: In the past two years, in times of the pandemic, my work has focussed on existential questions. In the new video work *Holding My Breath*, recorded in March 2020 in the first weeks of the pandemic, during the first lockdown and first experience of isolation and social distancing, all I do is to inhale and exhale small gasps of air. Yet, my breath is caught, controlled and protected: in a flexible, changeable and shimmering bubble of air. And inevitably set free, when the bubble, potentially filled with organic molecules, with fragments of bacteria or viruses, implodes and disperses its content into the room. My breath, carefully controlled and tangibly contained in an intimate sphere, becomes, quite literally, the medium of my reflections: on social distancing, on cultural isolation and well-being. Two years later, I am still holding my breath.

The process of inhaling and exhaling, of interacting with the volume of air filling the room, unfolds as an event in front of the camera that is at once delicate, intimate, and aesthetic, as well as a disquieting, vulnerable one, marked by abrupt breaks, dropouts, and cuts. The work explores the fragility of our own breath and the ambient air that surrounds us. As well as the vulnerability of our

own health and all personal securities that may collapse and burst at any moment, like the fragile, shimmering bubble of air in the video.

The video *Holding My Breath*, 2020 (which will be on view at the DZ BANK Kunststiftung in June 2022) can be experienced at <https://vimeo.com/409211734> and is part of my long series of Works with Wind (1989-2022).

The current experience of physical isolation and social distancing is also at the core of my most recent series of photographs presenting isolated fragments of nature, torn-out and removed from their contexts, and entitled *Isolation (Carte Blanche)*, 2022. In 1503, Albrecht Dürer painted *The Great Piece of Turf* - a simple piece of meadow. Since 2002, this famous study of nature has inspired me to create various photographic series of excavated pieces of lawn. In times of the current pandemic these individual fragments seem even more physically isolated in their white and void background, only digitally present and mediated, at a distance from the comprehensible world.

Isolation (Carte Blanche), 2022 — see cover image — is currently on view as a large-scale intervention in public space at Kommunale Galerie in Berlin, Germany.

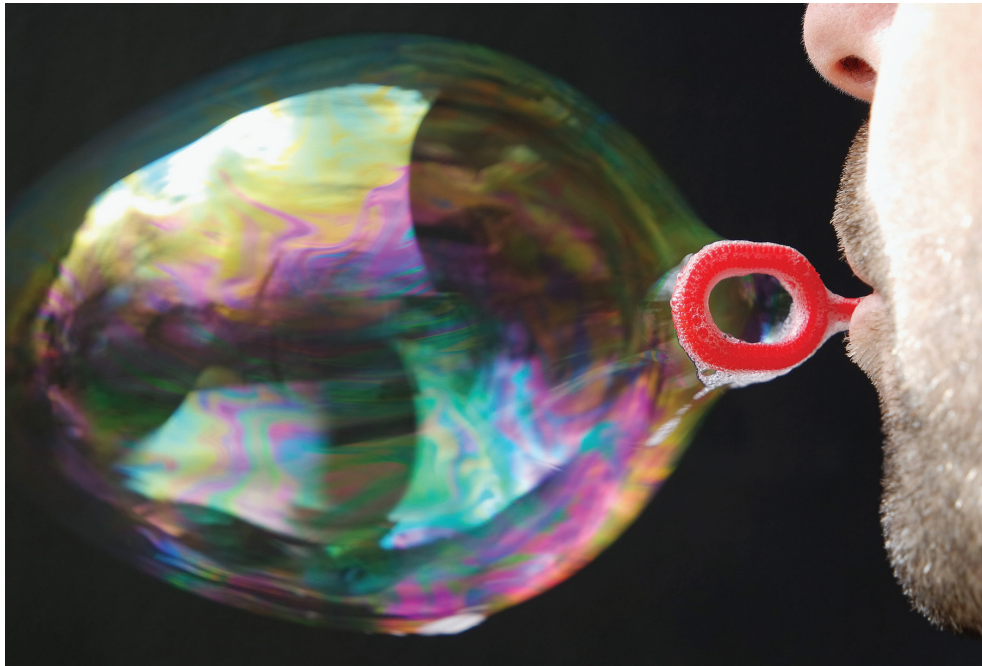
CI: What does your work aim to say?



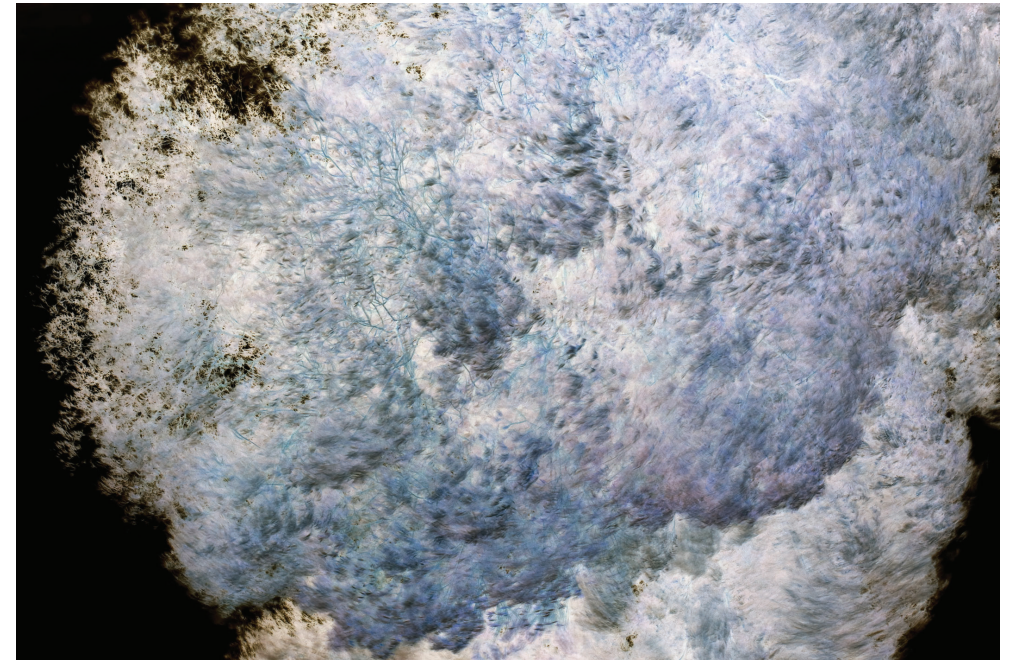
TWO, 2020, From a series of haptic sound sculptures made of artificial fur, enclosing sound and vibration. Realized with the support of Stiftung Kulturwerk of VG Bild-Kunst, © VG Bild-Kunst



Net Art 2005 - 2020, Documentation of twenty interactive works of Net Art that have, with the end of Flash on December 31, 2020 disappeared from the internet. See <https://vimeo.com/441602551>, (24:24 min, HD and sound), Stills from: *Audio Dust*, 2011. Interactive net art. © VG Bild-Kunst



Holding My Breath, 2020 (HD video and sound, 4:54 min) from: Works with Wind, 1989-2022, Times when you hold your breath - and the invisible becomes existential, Recorded in March 2020, during pandemic lockdown and the first experience of isolation and 'social distancing'. Published online at <https://vimeo.com/409211734>, © VG Bild-Kunst



Wind Photographs, 2021, from: Works with Wind, 1989-2022, Photographic series since 1991, Long-time exposures of (invisible) wind moving through trees, © VG Bild-Kunst

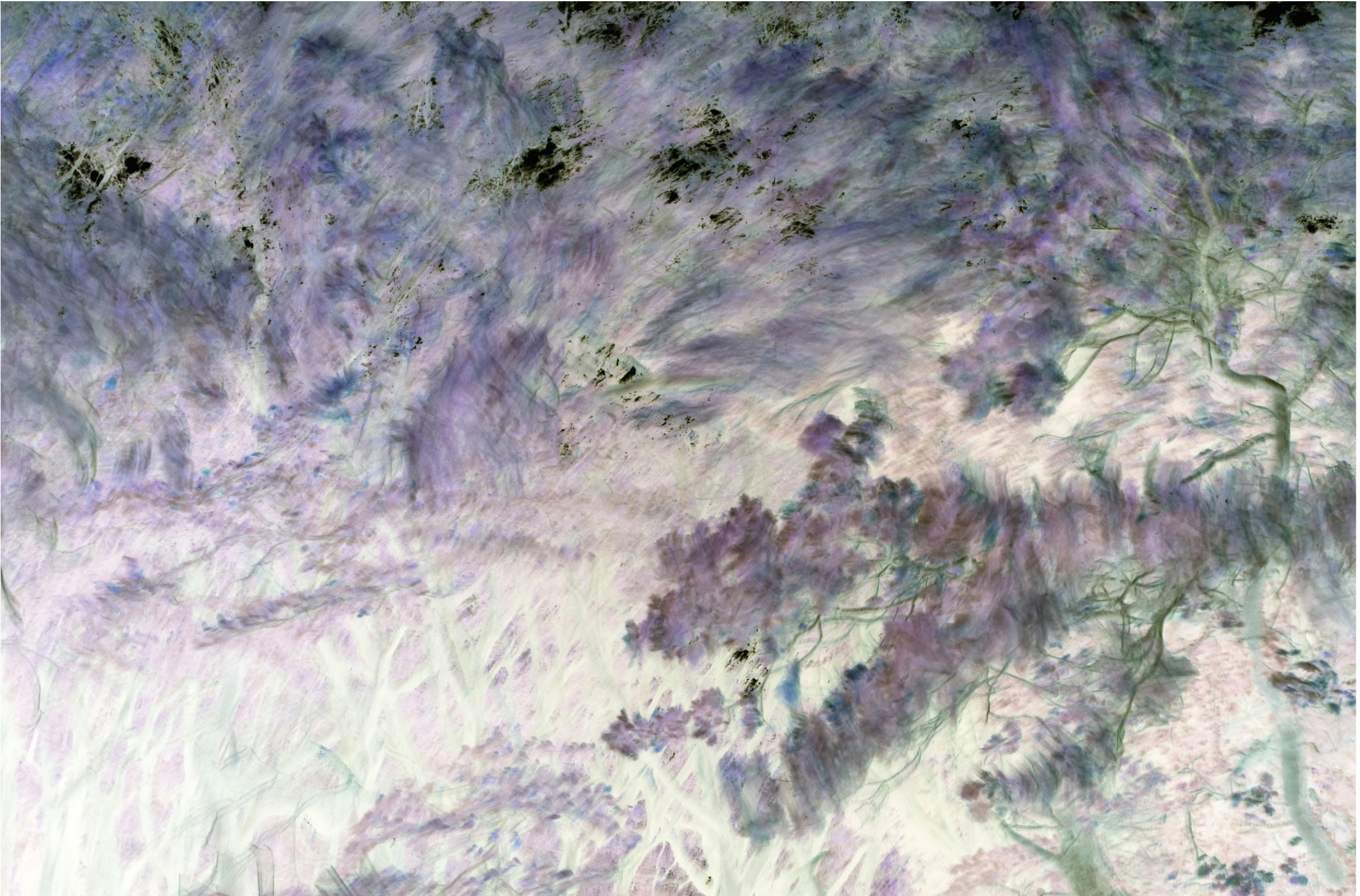
TK: My works, which are often time-based and fragile, are presented in the forms of a kinetic sound sculpture, a site-specific or temporary intervention, a touch-sensitive interactive work of net art, a video installation or a series of conceptual photographs: such as the Wind Photographs, 2021 from an ongoing series of long-time exposures of wind moving through the foliage of trees, 1991 - 2021, pictured in this edition of the magazine.

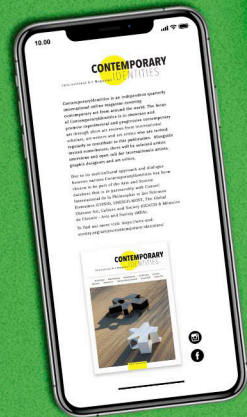
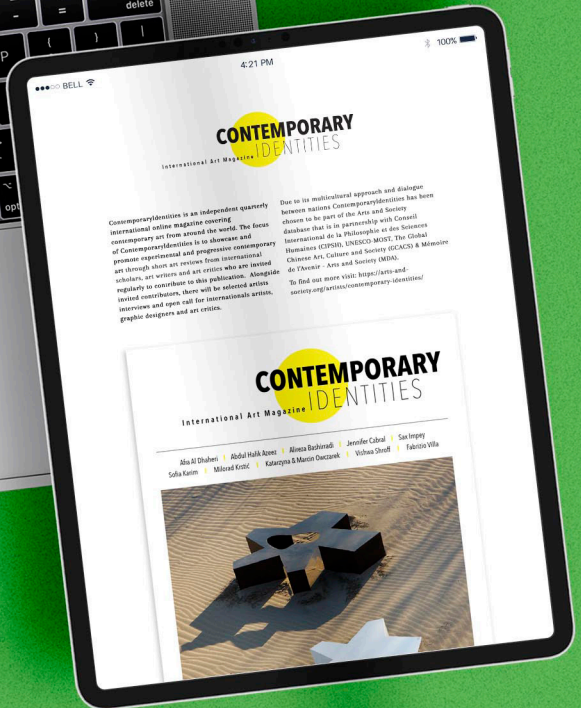
In several of the (infra-)sonic works, I aim to involve the viewers and/or listeners to experience my works by multiple senses: simultaneously hearing, seeing and touching my sound objects and their soft, fluffy or rough surfaces that vibrate and hum (and apparently lead a life of their own), or by providing room for spacial and physical exploration of the multiple facets of the sound installation in a given exhibition space.

Several of my works could (from 2005 - 2020, before becoming media-archaeological artifacts)

also be experienced online and were designed for an immediate and virtual interaction. A good acoustic and visual documentation of my twenty interactive works of net art (now in the collection of the ZKM Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe) that have, with the end of Flash on December 31, 2020 finally disappeared from the internet, 'Timo Kahlen: Net Art 2005 - 2020' (24:24 min, HD and sound), is available at <https://vimeo.com/441602551>.

Finally, if you're curious to learn more about the various aspects and topics of my work, you may want to have a look at <http://www.timo-kahlen.de>





www.contemporaryidentities.com
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