

RE



SISTERS

A Lens on Gender and Ecology

RE/SISTERS:

A Lens on Gender and Ecology

RE/SISTERS surveys the relationship between gender and ecology to highlight the systemic links between the oppression of women and Black, trans, and Indigenous communities, and the degradation of the planet. It comes at a time when gendered and racialised bodies are bending and mutating under the stresses and strains of planetary toxicity, rampant deforestation, species extinction, the privatisation of our common wealth, and the colonisation of the deep seas. *RE/SISTERS* shines a light on these harmful activities and underscores how, since the late 1960s, women and gender-nonconforming artists have resisted and protested the destruction of life on earth by recognising their planetary interconnectedness.

Emerging in the 1970s and 1980s, ecofeminism joined the dots between the intertwined oppressions of sexism, racism, colonialism, capitalism, and a relationship with nature shaped by science. Ecofeminist scholars have long critiqued feminised constructions of 'nature' while challenging patriarchal and colonial abuses against our planet, women, and marginalised communities. Increasingly, feminist theorists recognise that there can be no gender justice without environmental justice, and ecofeminism is being reclaimed as a unifying platform that all women can rally behind.

Uniting film and photography by over 50 women and gender-nonconforming artists from across different decades, geographies, and aesthetic strategies, the exhibition reveals how a woman-centred vision of nature has been replaced by a mechanistic, patriarchal order organised around the

exploitation of natural resources, alongside work of an activist nature that underscores how women are often at the forefront of advocating for and maintaining our shared earth.

Exploring the connections between gender and environmental justice as indivisible parts of a global struggle to address the power structures that threaten our ecosphere, the exhibition addresses the violent politics of extraction, creative acts of protest and resistance, the labour of ecological care, the entangled relationship between bodies and land, environmental racism and exclusion, and queerness and fluidity in the face of rigid social structures and hierarchies. Ultimately, *RE/SISTERS* acknowledges that women and other oppressed communities are at the core of these battlegrounds, not only as victims of dispossession, but also as comrades, as protagonists of the resistance.

EXTRACTIVE ECONOMIES /EXPLODING ECOLOGIES

Extractivism is the exploitation, removal, or exhaustion of natural resources on a massive scale. Rural, coastal, riverine, and Indigenous communities are disproportionately impacted by mining and other extractive industries, resulting in severe negative consequences on local livelihoods, community cohesion, and the environment. Women often face the worst impacts of a violent politics of such practices, and yet, they are leading the resistance against extractivism and stepping outside of traditional gender roles to champion movements fighting these destructive activities.

Over the past century, rivers, forests, deserts, and other natural environments have been subject to multiple forms of extraction, domestication, enclosure, erasure, and pollution on an unprecedented global scale. This has entailed the profound transformation of the flow of rivers and the disappearance of once lush, fertile land, raising questions about ecological justice for the communities that rely on these environments. Through their work, Carolina Caycedo, Sim Chi Yin, Mabe Bethônico, and Taloi Havini survey the material impact of extractive activities on rivers and dams, from Colombia to Vietnam, that support both human and more-than-human life in their nourishing embrace. Meanwhile, Simryn Gill, Otobong Nkanga, Chloe Dewe Mathews, and Mary Mattingly investigate the effects of industrial-scale mining on landscapes and communities, from Australia to Namibia. Ultimately, the works gathered here consider how extractivism operates as a material process underpinned by a pervasive colonial-capitalist mindset towards the exploitation of disempowered bodies and land.

Simryn Gill

Channel #1–29, 2014

20 Cibachrome and 9 gelatin silver prints

Courtesy of the artist and Richard Saltoun Gallery,
London/Rome

Channel is a series of 29 photographs that depict colourful plastic bags, fabric remnants and other everyday detritus washed up on the shores of a mangrove forest in Port Dickson, a small coastal town in Malaysia. Entangled in roots and branches, the bedraggled litter or 'residue of living' resembles clothes drying on a washing line, hinting at the unrecognised importance of both domestic and environmental care. The one outlying photograph in the series shows a wide view of the sea with a cargo ship sailing into port. By juxtaposing micro- and macro-photographic viewpoints, Gill encourages us to think about how our everyday experiences are linked to the vast systems of trade and industry that produce this waste. The colour photographs in *Channel* are printed on the last of the artist's Ilfochrome paper, which is no longer manufactured. By weaving the politics of the tropics with the materiality of photography, the work highlights the transient nature of commodities, which can move from being valued as production materials, to rarefied artworks, to detritus washed up on the shore.

Simryn Gill

Eyes and Storms #1, 2012

Eyes and Storms #2, 2012

Eyes and Storms #5, 2012

Eyes and Storms #7, 2012

Eyes and Storms #12, 2012

Eyes and Storms #13, 2012

Eyes and Storms #15, 2012

Eyes and Storms #19, 2012

Eyes and Storms #21, 2012

Vintage Cibachrome prints

Courtesy of the artist and Richard Saltoun Gallery,
London/Rome

Eyes and Storms comprises 23 aerial photographs of open-pit mines, dams and lakes, most of which were taken above the Pilbara region of Western Australia, of which 9 are shown here. These ruptures in the landscape are open wounds on the surface of the earth: a torturous landscape of manmade scars. By opting to photograph these 'eyes' – which bear witness to and memorialise ecological destruction – at times of the day when dramatic shadows theatrically emphasise the landscape's bodily textures, Gill denies the photographs a purely disembodied cartographical form. In doing so, the images resist what Macarena Gómez-Barris calls the extractivist viewpoint: an aerial perspective that 'reduces the representation of living things and entities into commodities'. By alluding to the corporeal in the images, Gill interrupts these spectacular and sublime shots of industry and nature. *Eyes and Storms* recognises and yet quietly resists the desire to abstract and detach the vast complexity of industrial extractive capitalism from the human.

Mabe Bethônico

Speaking of Mud, 2019

Two series of 16 pages of cut newspapers,
one inkjet sheet with photographs and text
Courtesy of the artist

Mirroring the fragility of the landscapes depicted, *Speaking of Mud* consists of two series of newssheets, each containing sixteen pages, from which the artist has forensically eliminated all textual elements. The found images depict the aftermath of two mining disasters in Brazil, when dams built by mining companies to hold the waste that is generated as a by-product of extraction processes burst, flooding the surrounding rivers and villages. Bethônico's razor-sharp dissection focuses our attention on how these violent ruptures devastate Indigenous communities and riverine ecologies. As the artist notes: 'Indigenous peoples did not follow the logic of private ownership. For them, land was fundamental; it was perceived as an extension of the body, rather than a neutral, disconnected or exchangeable element. Their relation to land is defined by a sense of communal property, rather than individual possession.' Alongside the newssheets, Bethônico includes images of the offices of Vale in the Canton de Vaud, Switzerland, the multinational corporation that owns the mining operations that enabled these dam disasters, making visible the transnational flow of capital that extracts from one locale so that another can profit.

Carolina Caycedo

Multiple Clitoris (Iguazú Cataracts, Brazil/Argentina), 2016

Photocollage printed on cotton canvas

Courtesy of the artist and Instituto de Visión, Colombia/
New York

Part of her multidisciplinary project *Be Dammed*, which critiques the 'mechanics of flow and control of dams and rivers' to address 'the privatization of waterways and the social and environmental impact of extractive, large-scale infrastructural projects', Carolina Caycedo's kaleidoscopic *Water Portraits* (2015–) float across gallery spaces, suspended from ceilings and cascading along walls. Printed on silk, cotton or canvas, Caycedo's photographs of rivers and waterfalls are remixed into pulsating, fractal, perception-shifting images that invite the viewer to reflect on the fluidity of bodies of water, which resist the phallogocentric logic of extraction. Ultimately, Caycedo's work encourages us to view these bodies of water as life-sustaining, life-embracing, other-than-human living organisms, and not just as resources for human extraction. A portrait of the water that powerfully carves through the long, narrow chasm known as Garganta del Diablo (Devil's Throat) – a canyon in the Iguazú Falls, on the border between Argentina and Brazil – Caycedo's vibrantly coloured *Multiple Clitoris* evokes the feminist, orgasmic energy of our 'corporeally connected aqueous community'.

Carolina Caycedo

Wanaawna Meets Salty Water, 2019

Photocollage printed on silk

Courtesy of the artist and Commonwealth and Council, Los Angeles

Caycedo's *Water Portraits* (2015–) present rivers as individuated organisms that sustain both human and nonhuman life in their rich embrace. The naming of these works as 'portraits' is critical to understanding Caycedo's position that rivers are 'the veins of the planet'. In contrast to the received heteropatriarchal value system of the Global North that views nature and culture as fundamentally opposed ways of being, Caycedo's work advocates an interspecies politics that recognises nature as having agency.

Otobong Nkanga

Tsumeb Fragments, 2015

6 modular metal structures, cement, copper,
12 inkjet images printed on Perspex, inkjet
images printed on Galala limestone, lightbox, minerals
from Tsumeb, video (5:48 mins)
and sound on headphones
Courtesy of the artist and KADIST collection

Tsumeb Fragments takes as its subject the 'Green Hill' in Tsumeb, Namibia, site of a former copper mine known for its rich minerals. Historically, the site had been hand-mined by the Ovambo people, but under German colonial rule in the early twentieth century it became a locus of industrial extraction, and the vast natural hill of green oxidised copper ore was transformed into a deep cavity. Taking the form of a small cluster of interconnected tables, the installation unites copper particles that hover over the central table while green malachite and blue azurite are embedded in cement alongside historical photographs of the mine and an image of an arsenic-contaminated slag heap is printed on limestone. Embedded in the installation, the film *The Remains of the Green Hill* shows Nkanga singing, performing yoga-like movements and balancing stones derived from the landscape on top of her head, consciously performing *in* and *for* this crater-like landscape that no longer serves its original function. By prioritising her bodily relationship to the place, Nkanga actively reinvests the site with a purpose and meaning that exists outside human exceptionalism.

Chloe Dewe Mathews

Transpersonal therapist Naira conducts a shamanic ritual amongst the petroglyphs on Tanredag holy mountain Gobustan, Azerbaijan, 2015

Half the world's mud volcanoes are on the Caspian coastline in Azerbaijan. Naira describes their eruptions as Mother Earth's orgasms and occasionally uses the site for specific rituals

Gobustan, Azerbaijan, 2015

Women caress the limestone walls of the Aq Meshit mosque while praying that their relations recover from illness

Zhylyoi District, Kazakhstan, 2014

A woman bathes in the salt water at Lake Baskunchak Astrakhan District, Russia, 2014

Hot springs at the Ramsar Grand Hotel Ramsar, Iran, 2015

From the series *Caspian: The Elements*, 2010–16

C-type prints

Courtesy of the artist

Chloe Dewe Mathews

A trickle of oil, spilled in transit outside the Naftalan Sanatorium

Naftalan, Azerbaijan, 2010

A young woman bathes in crude oil at the sanatorium town of Naftalan. This 'miracle oil' is found exclusively in the semi-desert region of central Azerbaijan, and it is claimed that

bathing in it for ten minutes a day has medicinal benefits
Naftalan, Azerbaijan, 2010

Crude oil reservoir
Naftalan, Azerbaijan, 2010

Crude oil samples on display at the Atyrau Institute of Oil
and Gas
Atyrau, Kazakhstan, 2014

The 'Door to Hell'. In 1971, Soviet geologists were drilling in
the Turkmen desert when the land gave way beneath them,
leaving a 70-metre-wide, noxious gas-emitting crater. They
ignited the gas to try to burn off the excess, but the crater
has been ablaze ever since
Darvaza, Turkmenistan, 2012

Oil rig and 'nodding donkey' (oil pumping jack) engraved
into the side of a mausoleum to commemorate a man who
made his fortune in the Caspian oil industry
Koshkar-Ata, Kazakhstan, 2010

People jump over seven fires on the night of Chaharshanbe
Suri. This 'festival of fire' takes place on the last
Wednesday before Nowruz Ramsar, Iran, 2015

From the series *Caspian: The Elements*, 2010–16

C-type prints
Courtesy of the artist

Mary Mattingly

Cobalt Map

From the series *Cobalt*, 2016

Chromogenic Dye-Coupler print

Courtesy of the artist and Robert Mann Gallery

Historically, cobalt has been known for its role in the production of bright blue pigments for use in textiles, ceramics, painting and, photography. Today, the largest consumer of cobalt is the United States military, as it is used in the making of products including lithium-ion batteries, camera sensor components and blades for jet engines. Since almost all the world's cobalt extraction takes place outside the USA, with the vast majority coming from the Democratic Republic of Congo, there has been a state-led push to build domestic cobalt mining and refining industries across the country. Mary Mattingly's photograph *Ore Transport* shows the newly constructed infrastructure that supports this production, while *Cobalt Map* reveals the commodity chains involved in the extraction, production and circulation of this rare-earth mineral, exposing the intricate social links that the resource creates. Mattingly shows us that behind the illusion of the photographic image are material resources that are tied to political and economic conditions. Acknowledging photography's connection to 'mapping, colonization, militarization, and security', Mattingly recognises how the medium 'slides precariously in and out of ethical arguments – it can at once illuminate social injustices while simultaneously exaggerating them.'

Mary Mattingly

Mineral Seep

From the series *Cobalt*, 2016

Chromogenic Dye-Coupler print

Courtesy of the artist and Robert Mann Gallery

Mary Mattingly

Ore Transport

From the series *Cobalt*, 2016

Chromogenic Dye-Coupler print

Courtesy of the artist and Robert Mann Gallery

Mary Mattingly

Eagle Mine

From the series *Cobalt*, 2016

Chromogenic Dye-Coupler print

Courtesy of the artist and Robert Mann Gallery

Sim Chi Yin

Shifting Sands #1

A family walking and fishing in an area in southern Malaysia now covered with giant sand dunes.

The Danga Bay area is earmarked for development, with much of the land reclaimed. Mangroves nearby appear to have been drowned by sand. The world is running out of sand as Asia's rapid urbanisation is driving up demand like never before.

From the series *Shifting Sands*, 2017–ongoing

Inkjet print on photo rag paper mounted on aluminium

Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul/Berlin

Shifting Sands examines the matrix of power that exists between urbanisation and land reclamation, the non-renewable natural resource of sand, and the erosion of land in poorer areas of the Global South to satisfy capitalism's imperial need to expand and colonise. Sim Chi Yin's ongoing project maps the emergence of artificial islands – from her home country of Singapore to Malaysia and China – as mirages of luxury that reveal the power of sovereign states to privatise the world's 'common' wealth while simultaneously destroying human and other-than-human habitats and communities. Juxtaposing the aestheticisation of the 'infrastructural' gaze with the human gaze, Sim's project asks: Who is 'reclaiming' that land? From whom, and for whom? Sim's project acknowledges the ecological consequences of draining entire regions of their sand reserves, and that injecting that same sand mixed with gravel and rocks in other ecosystems has led to catastrophes on both sides.

Sim Chi Yin

Shifting Sands #21

A 1-km stretch on the riverfront in Vam Nao in An Giang province, Vietnam, where massive erosion struck on 23 April 2017. A cluster of houses and a road collapsed into the river.

From the series *Shifting Sands*, 2017–ongoing Inkjet print on photo rag paper mounted on aluminium

Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul/Berlin

Sim Chi Yin

Shifting Sands #20

One of four artificial islands being built in the sea off the coast of Johor in southern Malaysia, part of a mega development named – with no irony intended – ‘Forest City’.

From the series *Shifting Sands*, 2017–ongoing Inkjet print on photo rag paper mounted on aluminium

Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul/Berlin

Sim Chi Yin

Shifting Sands #25

Nguyen Thi Hong, 45, who runs a small café, returns to her house, destroyed by erosion, a week after a midnight landslide struck in June 2017.

Hers was among five houses that partially fell into the river in the commune of Hiep Phuoc, in Nha Be district, 33km southeast of Saigon. Parts of the Mekong Delta are eroding at rates alarming experts, who say it is caused by ongoing damming work and rampant sand dredging upstream on the Mekong River. Vietnam, like many other countries around the world, is starting to feel the environmental and social cost of large-scale sand mining.

From the series *Shifting Sands*, 2017–ongoing

Inkjet print on photo rag paper mounted on aluminium

Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul/Berlin

Sim Chi Yin*Shifting Sands #2*

Land reclamation works are ongoing in Tuas, in Singapore's westernmost point where a massive new container port is being built. Singapore has been short of sand for its sizeable and continual land reclamation and construction work, having bought sand from its neighbouring Southeast Asian countries for decades. From the series *Shifting Sands*, 2017–ongoing
Inkjet print on photo rag paper mounted on aluminium
Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul/Berlin

Sim Chi Yin*Shifting Sands #4*

Earth or moon? A massive land reclamation area in Singapore's new port on its westernmost coast resembles a lunar landscape. From the series *Shifting Sands*, 2017–ongoing
Inkjet print on photo rag paper mounted on aluminium
Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul/Berlin

Sim Chi Yin*Shifting Sands #5*

Construction material - possibly 'manufactured sand' which is crushed granite - comes in on a barge into Singapore's east coast. Singapore, which has reclaimed about 20 per cent of its land from the sea since independence in 1965, is continually short of sand, after buying the resource from its Southeast Asian neighbours for years. From the series *Shifting Sands*, 2017–ongoing
Inkjet print on photo rag paper mounted on aluminium
Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul/Berlin

Sim Chi Yin

Shifting Sands #22

An overloaded sand barge in the Mekong Delta transports sand dredged up from the Mekong. Vietnam's sand is consumed locally but also exported to countries including Singapore.

From the series *Shifting Sands*, 2017–ongoing

Inkjet print on photo rag paper mounted on aluminium

Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul/Berlin

Sim Chi Yin

Pylons, China, 2013

Mounds of earth with pylons inserted are all that is left in this area dug up for its earth to build Lanzhou New Area in China's west – a new city constructed out of a desert landscape.

From the series *Shifting Sands*, 2017–ongoing

Inkjet print on photo rag paper mounted on aluminium

Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul/Berlin

Sim Chi Yin

Talismans, China, 2018

Ruyi island, off Haikou city, was intended as a tourist destination, with theme parks and hotels.

At over 7-square-kilometres it will be linked to the mainland by a 5.6-kilometre bridge.

From the series *Shifting Sands*, 2017–ongoing

Inkjet print on photo rag paper mounted on aluminium

Courtesy of the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul/Berlin

Taloi Havini

Habitat, 2017

Three-channel HD digital video installation, 16:9, 5:1
surround sound, 10:40 mins

Courtesy of the artist and Silverlens,
Manila/New York

Taloi Havini's poetic three-channel film centres around Agata, an elderly Indigenous matriarch and landowner who is filmed sifting gravel and walking across what appears to be a desert landscape as she travels from the tailings to the pit of the Panguna copper mine in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. Agata's life, like that of her matrilineal community, has been shaped by the history of extraction at Panguna, run by Conzinc Riotinto of Australia, which was the largest open-pit mine in the world at the time of its opening in 1972. A focal point of the ten-year Bougainville Civil War that lasted from 1988 to 1998, when inhabitants fought for Bougainville's autonomy from Papua New Guinea, Havini's film surveys the material impact of the mine, which reshaped Bougainville's lush landscape into a psychedelic patchwork of vivid blue-green as a result of poisonous tailings – the waste products of the mining process – seeping into the rivers and land. Examining capitalism as an extension of colonialism that perpetuates the destruction of the environment and Indigenous communities, Havini articulates how the colonisation of Indigenous women resulted in cultural disruption and undermined the matrilineal passage of property and land through women to women.

MUTATION: PROTEST AND SURVIVE

Women have a long history of protesting ecological destruction – from creative acts of civil disobedience and non-violent protest to armed resistance and climate legislation. Pamela Singh's photographs of the Chipko movement document women resisting the felling of trees in northern India, while Format Photographers and JEB (Joan E. Biren) captured the women-led anti-nuclear peace movements of the 1980s in the UK and USA, respectively. Susan Schuppli's film reflects on the right of ice to remain cold, as advocated by the Inuk activist Sheila Watt-Cloutier. Offering insights into the connections between patriarchal domination and the violence perpetrated against women and nature, the works in this section highlight the intertwined relationship between the survival of women and the struggle to preserve nature and life on earth.

Critical of the term 'revolution', in 1974 the French ecofeminist Françoise D'Eaubonne proposed the term 'mutation', which she argued would enact a 'great reversal' of man-centred power. This grand reversal of power does not imply a simple transfer of power from men to women, instead it suggests the radical 'destruction of power' by women – the only group capable of executing a successful systemic change, one that could liberate women as well as the planet.

Artists such as LaToya Ruby Frazier, Format Photographers, JEB (Joan E. Biren), Pamela Singh, and Poulomi Basu explore how communities of women – from web weavers to tree huggers and water defenders – have joined forces to combat violence against their bodies and land.

Andrea Kim Valdez

All Embrace the Base, 1983

Ceramic, tin foil, thread, mirror, colour photographs

Courtesy of the artist

Inspired by her time spent at Greenham Common, Andrea Kim Valdez's ceramic sculptures incorporate key motifs associated with the women's anti-nuclear movement, including 'embracing the base', cutting the fence, mirrors and, most significantly, the spider's web, the symbol most closely allied with the women's movement. By attaching photographs the artist took at Greenham to her ceramic sculptures, Valdez mimics how the infrastructure of the fence was routinely appropriated into the women's creative acts of civil disobedience.

Andrea Kim Valdez

Embrace the Base, 1983

Ceramic, tin foil

Courtesy of the artist

Andrea Kim Valdez

Embrace the Base, 1983

Ceramic, tin foil

Courtesy of the artist

Greenham Women Against Cruise Missiles, March 1984
Published by Center for Constitutional Rights
Courtesy The Women's Library, London School of Economics

Greenham Women Everywhere: Six Years, 1987
Pamphlet, cover
Courtesy The Women's Library, London School of Economics

Take Action on Racism, 1988
Pamphlet, cover illustration by Kathrine Jones
(formerly Katrina Howse)
Courtesy The Women's Library, London School of Economics

'Racism + poverty + radiation = cancer', 1985
Unknown photographer
Courtesy The Women's Library, London School of Economics

'Reclaim our lives' day, with Black Women for Wages for
Housework, 1986
Unknown photographer
Courtesy The Women's Library, London School of Economics

'Here to Stay Here to Verify', 1987
The Kings Cross Women's Centre
Courtesy The Women's Library, London School of Economics

'Pay Women Not the Military', 1985
Unknown photographer
Courtesy The Women's Library, London School of Economics

Women-Reclaim Greenham!, 1983
Pamphlet, cover with illustration by Kathrine Jones (formerly
Katrina Howse) and spread
Published by CND for the Greenham Women's Peace Camp
Courtesy The Women's Library, London School of Economics

Yellow Gate booklet, 1989

Pamphlet, cover illustration by Kathrine Jones (formerly Katrina Howse)

Courtesy The Women's Library, London School of Economics

Poster for blockade action, 1983

Courtesy Charlie Kiss Archive, Bishopsgate Institute, London

The Greenham Factor, 1984

Pamphlet, cover

Courtesy Charlie Kiss Archive, Bishopsgate Institute, London

Widening the Web, December 1985

Pamphlet, cover

Courtesy Charlie Kiss Archive, Bishopsgate Institute, London

Statement from women camping at Orange Gate, Greenham Common, 30 December 1983

Courtesy Charlie Kiss Archive, Bishopsgate Institute, London

Poster for an 'embrace the base' action at USAF Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire, 31 December 1982

Courtesy Bishopsgate Institute, London

Women Come Together, 1982

Pamphlet, cover

Courtesy Heather Woods

Contact information flyer, 1982

Courtesy Heather Woods

Selection of badges from Greenham Common,
c. 1980s

Courtesy The Peace Museum, Bradford

Nuclear Resisters, 1981

Published by Feminists Against Nuclear Power
Power, cover

Courtesy Matthew Harle

Songbook for Seneca Falls Wimmin's Peace Encampment,
1983

Cover and spreads

Courtesy Peace Encampment Herstory Project

*Resource handbook for the Seneca Women's
Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice*, 1983

Cover and spread

Courtesy Peace Encampment Herstory Project

Why a Women's Peace Camp?, 1983

Pamphlet

Courtesy Peace Encampment Herstory Project

Jane Doe, 1984

Newsletter

Courtesy Peace Encampment Herstory Project

Jane Doe, 1985

Newsletter

Courtesy Peace Encampment Herstory Project

Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice,
1983

Newsletter

Courtesy Peace Encampment Herstory Project

Gurminder Sikand

All Untitled, c. 2000-2010

Watercolour on paper

Courtesy the Estate of Gurminder Sikand

Gurminder Sikand's jewel-like, delicate watercolours are inspired by her connection to the women-led protest of Chipko, which espoused ideas of interconnectedness and non-separability between humans and forests. Wrapped around, standing next to or embracing trees, Sikand's naked women poetically reflect the deep spiritual connection between forests, soil, water and women's sustenance economies.

Gurminder Sikand

Chipko I, 1987

Watercolour, ink and gouache on paper

Courtesy the Estate of Gurminder Sikand

Gurminder Sikand

Chipko II, 1987

Watercolour, ink and gouache on paper

Courtesy the Estate of Gurminder Sikand

Pamela Singh

Chipko Tree Huggers of the Himalayas #074, 1994/2023

Selenium toned gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and sepiaEYE, New York

Pamela Singh's powerful black-and-white documentary photographs of the Chipko movement depict women from the villages of the Garhwal Hills in the Himalayas in Uttarakhand, northern India, calmly and peacefully clinging on to and embracing trees to save them from state- and industry-sanctioned loggers. Positioning themselves as human shields, with their arms interlocked around tree trunks, the women of this successful nonviolent protest became emblematic of an international ecofeminist movement eager to showcase the subordination of women and nature by global multinationals while underscoring women's environmental consciousness. The women were directly impacted by the rampant deforestation, which led to a lack of firewood as well as water for drinking and irrigation; by successfully opposing the planned fate of the trees, the women gained control of the means of production and the resources necessary for their daily lives, demonstrating the entangled relationship between the material needs of the women and the necessity to protect nature from domination and oppression.

Pamela Singh

Chipko Tree Huggers of the Himalayas #4, 1994/2023

Selenium toned gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and sepiaEYE, New York

Pamela Singh

Chipko Tree Huggers of the Himalayas #74, 1994/2023

Selenium toned gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and sepiaEYE, New York

Pamela Singh

Chipko Tree Huggers of the Himalayas #79, 1994/2023

Selenium toned gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and sepiaEYE, New York

Pamela Singh

*Chipko Tree Huggers of the Himalayas #125,
1994/2023*

Selenium toned gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and sepiaEYE, New York

Pamela Singh

*Chipko Tree Huggers of the Himalayas #3/25,
1994/2023*

Selenium toned gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and sepiaEYE, New York

Pamela Singh

*Chipko Tree Huggers of the Himalayas #546,
1994/2023*

Selenium toned gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and sepiaEYE, New York

Poulomi Basu

All works *Untitled*, from the series *Centralia*, 2010–20

C-type prints

Courtesy of the artist

A complex and multilayered work, *Centralia* gives powerful visual form to the protracted war waged by the Indian military-corporate complex against indigenous communities (Adivasi) over land sovereignty, the expansion of extractive corporate mining, and the violence, particularly against women, that accompanies the extraction of minerals from the soil in central-east India, commonly known as the 'red corridor'. Basu, who has devoted her career to documenting the resilience of women, here turns her lens on the militancy of women fighters in the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army. In solitary images of women in military fatigues bearing antiquated rifles, often captured in vulnerable isolation alongside images of gender-based violence, Basu bears witness to the central role women play in armed resistance.

From left to right:

Agnes Denes

With Statue of Liberty across the Hudson, 1982

Aerial View, 1982

Blue Sky, World Trade Center, 1982

The Harvest, 1982

Golden Wheat (Close-up), 1982

Green Wheat Turning, 1982

With New York Financial Center, 1982

Before Planting, 1982

Ocean liner passing Wheatfield on the Hudson, 1982

Green Wheat, 1982

Aerial View 2, 1982

Harvest with Sailboat, 1982

From the series *Wheatfield – A Confrontation: Battery Park*

Landfill, Downtown Manhattan, 1982

C-type prints

Courtesy of the artist and Leslie Tonkonow Artworks +
Projects, New York

In 1982, under the looming shadow of the World Trade Center in downtown Manhattan and set against the symbolic presence of the Statue of Liberty, Agnes Denes – a pioneer in environmental art – planted 8,000 square metres of wheat at Battery Park Landfill in New York City. Planted and harvested on prime real estate, Denes's reclamation of this land was, as she said, an 'effrontery' and a conscious exercise in 'wasting valuable real estate'. With its location selected for its proximity to the symbols of high capitalism, *Wheatfield – A Confrontation* 'represented food, energy, commerce, world trade, economics. It referred to mismanagement, waste, world hunger, and ecological concerns.' Denes's stated aim was to draw attention to 'misplaced priorities' and emphasise that 'the quality of life, even life itself, was in danger'. Underscored by a strong ecofeminist bent, *Wheatfield* is

an exercise in reclaiming the land while also celebrating earth's generative potential. Powerfully mutating the land's purpose, *Wheatfield* was not just a symbolic intervention but a poignant social action as Denes gave the harvest away rather than materially gain from it.

LaToya Ruby Frazier

The Flint Water Treatment Plant, Flint, Michigan,
2016–17

From *Act I*, 2016–17, from the series

Flint is Family, 2016–20

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery

Over the course of six months in 2016, artist and activist LaToya Ruby Frazier immersed herself in the lives of those affected by the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, a project she described as a 'photo essay between two women – a photographer and a poet – addressing a manmade water crisis in the twenty-first century'. Frazier's tender portraits of three generations of Flint women – the poet Shea Cobb, her mother Ms Renée and daughter Zion – bear witness, in Frazier's words, to 'environmental racism, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy and capitalism'. Tracing the story of how lead had leached into the water infrastructure of this former industrial town and the homes and bodies of its residents, triggering a years-long public health crisis, Frazier provides a platform for those living in Flint to tell their account of what happened and, in doing so, reveals the human consequences of systemic injustice.

LaToya Ruby Frazier

*Flint Students and Community Members Outside
Northwestern High School*

*(Est. 1964) Awaiting the Arrival of President Barack
Obama, May 4, 2016, Flint, Michigan, I, 2016–17*

*From Act I, 2016–17, from the series Flint is Family,
2016–20*

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery

LaToya Ruby Frazier

*Shea and Zion at the Badawest Restaurant on Corunna
Road, Flint, Michigan, I,*

2016–17

*From Act I, 2016–17, from the series Flint is Family,
2016–20*

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery

LaToya Ruby Frazier

*Shea Brushing Zion's Teeth with Bottled Water in Her
Bathroom, Flint, Michigan, 2016–17*

*From Act I, 2016–17, from the series Flint is Family,
2016–20*

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery

LaToya Ruby Frazier

The Grainery Natural Grocery Signage on the Corner of East Court Street and Church Street, Flint, Michigan, 2016–17

From Act I, 2016–17, from the series Flint is Family, 2016–20

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery

LaToya Ruby Frazier

A Mother Holding Her Two Sons Along Side Flint Community Members Outside Northwestern High School (Est. 1964), Awaiting the Arrival of President Barack Obama, May 4, 2016, Flint, Michigan, 2016–17

From Act I, 2016–17, from the series Flint is Family, 2016–20

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery

LaToya Ruby Frazier

A Flint Child Showing Me a Wanted Poster of Michigan Governor Rick Snyder Outside Northwestern High School (Est. 1964), Awaiting the Arrival of President Barack Obama, May 4, 2016, Flint, Michigan, 2016–17

From Act I, 2016–17, from the series Flint is Family, 2016–20

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery

Minerva Cuevas

A Draught of the Blue, 2013

Single channel HD colour video, 9:48 mins

Courtesy of the artist and kurimanzutto,
Mexico City / New York

Filmed off the coastal resort of Akumal in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula, *A Draught of the Blue* shows two divers descend into the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System to protest on behalf of marine life. With phrases such as 'Omnia sunt communia' (a Latin saying that translates to 'all things are to be held in common'), '1%' (a reference to wealth inequality), '25%' (the estimated percentage of marine life reliant on coral) and 'IN TROUBLE' emblazoned across banners, the divers advocate for the rights and agency of marine life in the face of impending ecological collapse. As ecosystems that support various types of life as well as serving to protect against coastal erosion and flooding, marine reefs demonstrate the integral interdependence of humans and the natural world.

Susan Schuppli

COLD RIGHTS, 2022

Single channel HD colour video with stereo sound,
13:43 mins

Courtesy of the artist

In 2005, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights dismissed a petition filed by Inuk activist Sheila Watt-Cloutier on behalf of herself and 62 Inuit people. The petition was named 'Seeking Relief from Violations Resulting from Global Warming Caused by Acts and Omissions of the United States' and argued for the right of ice to remain cold. The conditions of global warming have had consequences for the state of ice and, consequently, lives and habitats that rely on the frozenness of permafrost, polar ice caps and mountain glaciers. Schuppli's film explores how legal systems might account and advocate for nonhuman agents that are material witnesses to this ecological degradation.

1. Format Photographers (Pam Isherwood)

Main Gate, entrance hall,

Greenham Common, 11 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

In September 1981, the Welsh group Women for Life on Earth marched to RAF Greenham Common in Berkshire, southeast England, to protest the storage of nuclear weapons. On arrival, they announced: 'We fear for the future of all our children and for the future of the living world which is the basis of all life.' The following year, the founders declared the camp 'women-only' and established the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp. It would become, for a time, the largest women's protest since the suffragettes – with 70,000 participants at its peak – and continued until 2000. Many women camped at Greenham for an extended period; the protest was heavily monitored by police, and media representation was often negative. The Greenham women saw the anti-nuclear struggle as a feminist issue, recognising how the values of militarism and patriarchy are bound together. Established in 1983, Format Photographers was a loose collective of women photographers that included Maggie Murray, Pam Isherwood, Raissa Page, Melanie Friend, Brenda Prince, Joanne O'Brien, Jenny Matthews, and Val Wilmer, among others. By virtue of being a women-only agency, they quickly won the trust of their fellow resisters and actively photographed life at the camp between 1983 and 1985.

2. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

Communal kitchen, Greenham Common, July 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

3. Format Photographers (Jenny Matthews)

Bender shelters were makeshift tents that could be erected and dismantled quickly, a necessity because of the frequent police raids of the Peace Camp, Greenham Common, 1982

C-type print

4. Format Photographers (Melanie Friend)

Washing up, Greenham Common,
February 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

5. Format Photographers (Pam Isherwood)

The larder at the Main Gate,
Greenham Common, 11 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

6. Format Photographers (Maggie Murray)

Woman at the Green Gate of the
Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp,
11 December 1983

C-type print

7. Format Photographers (Pam Isherwood)

The women's sleeping quarters consisted of plastic shelters since more permanent structures, such as tents, were made illegal by local council byelaws, Greenham Common, 11 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

8. Format Photographers (Melanie Friend)

Inside a tent at Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, 1984

Digital gelatin silver resin print

9. Format Photographers (Melanie Friend)

Mother and baby, Greenham Common, 23 September 1984

Digital gelatin silver resin print

10. Format Photographers (Pam Isherwood)

Day of action to commemorate the sixth anniversary of NATO's decision to deploy cruise missiles, 14 December 1985

Digital gelatin silver resin print

11. Format Photographers (Raissa Page)

Christmas at Greenham Common, 25 December 1982

C-type print

12. Format Photographers (Maggie Murray)

Protesters at the Embrace the Base demonstration,
Greenham Common,
12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

13. Format Photographers (Raissa Page)

30,000 women surround the air base to protest the siting
of 96 cruise missiles with nuclear warheads, Greenham
Common,
12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

14. Format Photographers (Jenny Matthews)

Baby garments adorning the fence, Greenham Common,
12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

15. Format Photographers (Raissa Page)

Pensioners vigil, Greenham Common,
20 May 1984

Digital gelatin silver resin print

16. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

Protest banner at Orange Gate during a
day of action, Greenham Common,
12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

17. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

Embrace the Base, Greenham Common,
12 December 1982

C-type print

18. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

Mirrors and sounds demonstration, Greenham Common,
December 1983

C-type print

19. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

During Embrace the Base women would hold hands
around the perimeter fence at the Greenham Common
air base,

12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

20. Format Photographers (Maggie Murray)

Woman weaving a web,
Greenham Common, December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

21. Format Photographers (Maggie Murray)

Mirrors and sounds demonstration, Greenham Common,
December 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

22. Format Photographers (Jenny Matthews) Embrace the

Base, Greenham Common,

12 December 1982

C-type print

23. Format Photographers (Maggie Murray)

30,000 women embrace the base,
Greenham Common, 12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

24. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

Protest with mirrors that sought to reflect evil back into the base, Greenham Common, 11 December 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

25. Format Photographers (Raissa Page)

A human chain encircling the air base whilst parts of the fence were cut down,

11 December 1983

C-type print

26. Format Photographers (Sheila Gray)

Women singing at the Embrace the Base weekend of action, Greenham Common,

12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

27. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince) Protestors would tie string into webs that they could hold on to when the police tried to drag them away, Greenham Common,

12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

28. Format Photographers (Raissa Page)

1,500 women take nonviolent direct action to blockade the air base, Greenham Common, 13 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

29. Format Photographers (Maggie Murray)

Embrace the Base, Greenham Common, 12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

30. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

Women blocking the road at a weekend of protest action, Greenham Common, 13 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

31. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

Main Gate, Greenham Common, Summer 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

32. Format Photographers (Pam Isherwood)

Confiscated ladders behind a Ministry of Defence sign, Greenham Common, 1 January 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

33. Format Photographers (Jenny Matthews)

Women manage to cut down large sections of the perimeter fence, Greenham Common, 29 October 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

34. Format Photographers (Raissa Page)

Women dancing on top of a missile silo, Greenham Common, New Year's Day, 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

35. Format Photographers (Pam Isherwood)

Press tent at the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's
Easter action, 31 March 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

36. Format Photographers (Joanne O'Brien)

Some of the 26 women who cut through
the Greenham Common air base fence,
12 May 1984

Digital gelatin silver resin print

37. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

Air base fence decorated by protesters
at night, Greenham Common,
12 December 1982

C-type print

38. Format Photographers (Pam Isherwood)

Fence
memorial, Greenham Common,
12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

39. Format Photographers (Maggie Murray)

80-year-old woman goes over the fence at dawn to
dance on the nuclear missile silos in the first mass break
into Greenham Common air base, 1 January 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

40. Format Photographers (Maggie Murray)

Air base fence decorated by protesters
at night, Greenham Common,
12 December 1982

C-type print

41. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

Perimeter fence, Greenham Common,
12 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

42. Format Photographers (Pam Isherwood)

Policeman manhandling protestor at a mass
demonstration, Greenham Common,
11 December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

43. Format Photographers (Joanne O'Brien)

Demonstration at the fence, Greenham Common, 12
December 1982

Digital gelatin silver resin print

44. Format Photographers (Brenda Prince)

Perimeter
fence, Greenham Common,
12 September 1982

C-type print

45. Format Photographers (Jenny Matthews)

A protestor dressed as a witch conversing with
Greenham Common base personnel through a loosened
section of the perimeter fence, 29 October 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin print

All courtesy of the artists and the Format Photographers
Archive at the Bishopsgate Institute, London

JEB (Joan E. Biren)

Look to the Women for Courage: Stories from the Seneca Encampment for Peace and Justice, 1984

Slideshow, 42:08 mins

Courtesy of the artist and Smith College Special Collections, Northampton, MA

JEB (Joan E. Biren)

Assembled women at the official opening of the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, Romulus, New York, 4 July 1983

Established in 1983, the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice was an all-women's protest against nuclear weapons and military violence based at the Seneca Army Depot in upstate New York. Taking a radical stance against militarism, violence and patriarchal oppression, and modelling their approach after the women's camp at Greenham Common in England, the Seneca encampment drew participants from a large number of women's peace groups. A site of historic feminist significance, Seneca Falls had been the backdrop for the first women's rights convention in the United States in July 1848. A staunch advocate of lesbian visibility, JEB garnered critical attention for the rule-breaking travelling slideshows that she performed across the USA between 1979 and 1985, celebrating and elevating a 'lesbian semiotics' that encouraged a queer way of looking. In 1983, JEB documented the first summer of nonviolent direct actions at Seneca Falls, protesting the deployment of first-strike cruise and Pershing II nuclear missiles to Europe. Captured in explosive technicolour, JEB's photographs of life at Seneca bear witness to feminist consensual politics alongside the

opposition the women faced from local communities underpinned by a fervent anti-communist sentiment.

Barn with mural painted by participants at the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice.

The images of women and a web represented the interconnectedness of all things. The barn was used for workshops and film, video and slideshow screenings, 1983

Planning session for 1 August action at the Seneca Army Depot, Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, 1983

Film crew documenting marchers from the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice as they move towards Seneca Army Depot, 1 August 1983

Demonstrator from the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, 1 August 1983

Full-size replica of a cruise missile with protest messages painted on it, mounted on top of a van. The web of yarn in front of the van represents the interconnectedness of all things, 1983

A group of demonstrators from the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, who are woven together with colourful yarn and string, prepare to go over the fence, 1 August 1983

Demonstrators attach origami paper cranes, symbols of peace, to the fence of the Seneca Army Depot, October 1983

Counter-demonstrators at the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, 2 August 1983

Detail of the banner on the pavilion at the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, summer 1983

Women built the pavilion to use for large gatherings at the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, summer 1983

The Ithaca area affinity group from the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice is the first to go over the fence at the Seneca Army Depot, August 1, 1983

A group of around 2,000 gather from the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice marching to the Seneca Army Depot, August 1, 1983

Soldiers inside the Seneca Army Depot mobilize to respond to Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice demonstration, August 1, 1983

Counter demonstrators at the Seneca Army Depot gate chant "go home" in response to the actions of the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, August 1, 1983

Demonstrators from the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice block the truck gate to the Seneca Army Depot, August 1, 1983

Military police working to push back demonstrators from the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice away from the truck gate at the Seneca Army Depot, August 2, 1983

Support women from the encampment blockade the sheriff to prevent the court proceedings from continuing, Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, August 3, 1983

Peace activists 'adjust' a billboard to read "Stop War", 1983

All from the slideshow *Look to the Women for Courage: Stories from the Seneca Encampment for Peace and Justice*, 1984

C-type prints

All courtesy of the artist and Smith College Special Collections, Northampton, MA

EARTH MAINTENANCE

The practice of earth maintenance and the labour of ecological care stand in direct opposition to the masculinist value system of the capitalist economy. In the late 1970s and early 80s, feminist artists such as Mierle Laderman Ukeles and Helène Aylon practised earth care as a form of resistance, linking classed, racialised, and gendered struggles with ecological justice. Further, the works assembled here make clear the link between maintenance work in the domestic sphere, which was traditionally defined as 'women's work', and the undervalued labour required to care for our planet. From 1979 to 1980, Mierle Laderman Ukeles set out to make visible the overlooked yet fundamental work of New York's sanitation workers, the caretakers of the city who repeatedly cleaned up the refuse and waste polluting its environment. Around the same time, Helène Aylon politicised earth care by gathering toxic soil from nuclear military sites, placing it inside pillowcases and carrying the soil to institutions of power in her 'Earth Ambulance'.

Seeking new modes of earth maintenance and protest against the continuous exploitation of nature, through the mid-1990s Fern Shaffer performed private rituals at locations in need of healing. melanie bonajo's film *Nocturnal Gardening* (2016), part of their series *Night Soil Trilogy* (2014-2016), positions women as agents of political and social change by studying how communities come together to forge alternative ways of living in harmony with the land. The audio installation *The Grindmill Songs Project*, from the People's Archive of Rural India, brings into the gallery the collective singing of women from

central India who are typically silenced while their daily existence is absorbed into a local and global system of value creation from which they do not benefit.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles

Sanman Speaks, 1979–1980

Originally shot on 3/4", transferred to digital,
58:29 mins

Courtesy of the artist and Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York

Since 1977, the feminist maintenance artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles has been the first and only official, unpaid artist-in-residence at the New York City Department of Sanitation. Over eleven months from 24 July 1979 to 26 June 1980, she undertook her

Touch Sanitation Project, a performance in which she shook the hand of every one of New York City's 8,500 refuse collectors, saying to each of them, 'Thank you for keeping New York City alive!' While Ukeles's early work dealt with feminist questions of the domestic economy and the essential yet invisible maintenance tasks performed by women in the private sphere of the home, in this urban ecological work Ukeles draws attention to the asymmetrical socioeconomic relations, labour processes, and the invisibility of the so-called 'sanmen' who work tirelessly to sanitise, neutralise and maintain the city. In so doing, Ukeles emphasises how both women and, in this case, male service workers are joined in their shared labour of maintaining and caring for the sanitation of public and private spaces.

Mierle Laderman Ukeles

Touch Sanitation, 1979–80/2017

July 24, 1979–June 26, 1980. Citywide performance with 8,500 Sanitation workers across all fifty-nine New York City Sanitation districts

Archival pigment prints

Sammlung Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich

From left to right:

9 August, 1979

Sweep 2, Brooklyn 31

Photograph by Marcia Bricker

24 July, 1979

Sweep 1, Manhattan 1

Photograph by Lee White

8 August, 1979

Sweep 2, Bronx 21

Photograph by Marcia Bricker

8 August, 1979

Sweep 2, Bronx 21

Photograph by Marcia Bricker

8 August, 1979

Sweep 2, Brooklyn 31

Photograph by Marcia Bricker

14 May, 1980

Sweep 10, Manhattan 11

Photograph by Deborah Freedman

24 March, 1980

Sweep 7, Staten Island 2

Photograph by Deborah Freedman

9 August, 1979

Sweep 2, Brooklyn 31

Photograph by Marcia Bricker

9 August, 1979
Sweep 2, Brooklyn 31
Photograph by Marcia Bricker

15 May, 1980
Sweep 10, Queens District 14
Photograph by Vincent Russo

20 January, 1980
Sweep 5, Queens 60
Photograph by Marcia Bricker

9 August, 1979
Sweep 2, Brooklyn 31
Photograph by Marcia Bricker

Landfill (location and date unknown)
Photograph by Deborah Freedman

20 January, 1980
Sweep 5, Queens 60
Photograph by Marcia Bricker

24 March, 1980
Sweep 7, Staten Island 2
Photograph by Deborah Freedman

24 March, 1980
Sweep 7, Staten Island 2
Photograph by Deborah Freedman

Location and date unknown
Photograph by Marcia Bricker

15 April, 1980
Sweep 8, Manhattan 8
Photograph by Deborah Freedman

20 January, 1980
Sweep 5, Queens 60
Photograph by Marcia Bricker

Date unknown
Sweep 3, Manhattan 3
Photograph by Robin Holland

24 March, 1980
Sweep 7, Staten Island 2
Photograph by Deborah Freedman

9 August, 1979
Sweep 2, Brooklyn 31
Photograph by Marcia Bricker

15 April, 1980
Sweep 8, Manhattan 7
Photograph by Deborah Freedman

15 April, 1980
Sweep 8, Manhattan 7
Photograph by Deborah Freedman

14 May, 1980
Sweep 10, Manhattan 11
Photograph by Deborah Freedman

18 April, 1980
Sweep 8, Brooklyn 14/15
Photograph by Marcia Bricker

20 November, 1979
Sweep 4, Queens 54
Photograph by Tobi Kahn

20 November, 1979
Sweep 4, Queens 54
Photograph by Tobi Kahn

20 November, 1979
Sweep 4, end of day in Artist's office, DSNY
Photograph by Robin Kahn

20 November, 1979
Sweep 4, end of day in Artist's office, DSNY
Photograph by Robin Kahn

Mierle Laderman Ukeles

Touch Sanitation: Artist's Letter of Invitation Sent to Every Sanitation Worker with Performance Itinerary for 10 Sweeps in All 59 Districts in New York City, 1979

Printed 4-page brochure (inside spread)

Sammlung Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich

Helène Aylon

Poster for Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, Seneca Army Depot, N.Y., 1983

Courtesy of the Helène Aylon Estate and
Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects

Helène Aylon

Photographs from *Terrestri:*

Rescued Earth, 2 May – 12 June 1982

Black-and-white and c-type prints

Courtesy of the Helène Aylon Estate and
Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects

Helène Aylon

Earth Ambulance Itinerary, 1982

From the series *Terrestri: Rescued Earth*

2-sided poster (front and back)

Courtesy of the Helène Aylon Estate and Leslie Tonkonow
Artworks + Projects

Helène Aylon

'sac' Survive And Continue Poster, 1982

From the series *Terrestri: Rescued Earth*

Offset lithograph print

Courtesy of the Helène Aylon Estate and Leslie Tonkonow
Artworks + Projects

Fern Shaffer

Cashe River Basin, Illinois, 9 September 2003

From the series *Nine Year Rituals*, 1995–2003

Photograph by Othello Anderson

Archival inkjet pigment prints

Courtesy of the artist

Over the course of nine years at locations across North America, Fern Shaffer performed private healing rituals at sites affected by the industrial-agricultural complex and impending extinction. Shaffer performed these self-designed spiritual performances at places including Big Sur, on California's Pacific Coast; a cornfield outside Mineral Point in Wisconsin; on the summit of the Blue Ridge Mountain in Virginia; and at the Cache River basin in Illinois, among others. Photographed by her collaborator Othello Anderson in sequential images, Shaffer is pictured twisting and twirling in a handmade garment that conceals her bodily form and face, rejecting a human-centred and individualistic relationship to nature.

Fern Shaffer

Summit of Blue Ridge Mountain, Virginia,

9 April 1998

From the series *Nine Year Rituals*, 1995–2003

Photograph by Othello Anderson

Archival inkjet pigment prints

Courtesy of the artist

Fern Shaffer

In a Cornfield Outside of Mineral Point, Wisconsin,

9 March 1997

From the series *Nine Year Rituals*, 1995–2003

Photograph by Othello Anderson

Archival inkjet pigment prints

Courtesy of the artist

Fern Shaffer

The edge of the Pacific Ocean, Big Sur, California,
9 February 1996

From the series *Nine Year Rituals*, 1995–2003

Photograph by Othello Anderson

Archival inkjet pigment prints

Courtesy of the artist

People's Archive of Rural India

The Grindmill Songs Project

Riding the grindmill chariot to prosperity, 6:18 mins

What is the worth of a woman's endless work?, 8:35 mins

Seven songs of summer, 5:59 mins

The extraordinary colour of rain, 4:25 mins

Songs of love for the migrant away from home, 4:31 mins

Single channel audio installation

Courtesy of the People's Archive of Rural India

The Grindmill Songs Project (GSP) is a collection of more than 100,000 folk songs composed and sung by women from the state of Maharashtra in western India while toiling at the *jāte* (grindmill or grinding stone) at home. The singers are ordinary rural women, the majority of them with no formal education, but that has not hindered their exceptional power of expression. Each song is an *ovi*, or couplet. The word *ovi* in the Marathi language is derived from the word *ovane*, which means 'strung together'; the women string words together, conveying meaning, even as they rhyme. The songs, handed down through generations of women – mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers – are collective memories. Altogether, 3,302 women from over 1,100 villages in Maharashtra and seventeen villages in neighbouring Karnataka were involved in this phenomenal recording of a poetic-musical legacy. These women are the fountain spring of the *jatyavarchi ovi*, or grindmill song, an oral cultural heritage. (Text by Namita Waikar)

melanie bonajo

Night Soil Trilogy–Nocturnal Gardening, 2016

Mixed media installation

Courtesy the Bonnefanten Museum, Maastricht

Celebrating and elevating practices of social, mental and environmental healing, melanie bonajo's powerful film *Nocturnal Gardening*, part of their wider *Night Soil Trilogy* (2014–16), is structured around the lives of four women united by their intimate and reciprocal relationships to specific environments, from old-growth forests to the arid desert of Navajo land. Through the lives of four women – a Navajo-land-rights activist, a palaeolithic revivalist and forest forager, a food justice organiser and a woman pig farmer who encourages kinship between humans and other-than-humans – who have each embraced alternative lifestyles that reject capitalist value systems, the film platforms women who are striving for connection with other communities, plants, animals and the elements. In collaboration with Théo Demans and Clemence Seilles, the film is set in an immersive spatial environment that reflects the concerns of the film, providing a complete sensual and bodily experience.

PERFORMING GROUND

For women artists in the 1970s and 80s, to locate the body as part of the natural world was to perform a highly politically charged act. At a time when even the countercultural 'return' to nature was bound up in the discourse of patriarchy, picturing and performing the body as ecologically entangled carried with it radical feminist potential. Entwined, cocooned, or concealed, artists such as Laura Aguilar, Tee A. Corinne, Ana Mendieta, Fina Miralles, and Francesca Woodman blurred the boundaries between body and ground, undoing the distinction between human and more-than-human in their merging of animal, vegetal, and mineral. By deploying camouflage strategies, the artists gathered here resist demands for gendered and racialised bodies to be contained by settler-colonial politics or extractive logics, and rather forge mutual relationships with their environments.

To 'perform ground' is to deliberately and strategically locate the self not merely *in* the world, but *of* it. It asks us to rethink established hierarchies of relations between the human and the more-than-human. In contrast with much Land art, which has staged large-scale and controlled interventions into the natural environment predominantly by men, the ecologically oriented works presented here by women artists place the body in communion with the land. Judy Chicago, The Neo Naturists, and Xaviera Simmons heighten the visibility of their bodies in relation to the more-than-human world by painting themselves in vivid colours and patterns or using paint to critique racial stereotypes. In doing so, these artists explore how the representation of women and nature has always been an act entangled in history, power, and agency.

Ana Mendieta

Imágen de Yágul, 1973/1991

Colour photograph

Courtesy Estate of Ana Mendieta Collection,
LLC and Galerie Lelong & Co., New York

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Cuban-born American artist Ana Mendieta used her own body, together with elemental matter such as blood, fire, earth and water, to create visceral performances and ephemeral 'earth body' sculptures that combine ritual with metaphors of life, death, rebirth and spiritual transformation. In *Imágen de Yágul*, Mendieta places her body in an ancient Zapotec tomb at the pre-Hispanic Mesoamerican site of Yágul in southern Mexico. By consciously inserting her body into a space of death while also recalling ideas of fertility and femininity, Mendieta asks us to reflect on the body's inevitable demise while simultaneously underscoring the power of the female body to create, sustain and nurture life. Critically probing feminist politics surrounding land use and the constructed binary between the human and other-than-human, here flowers emerge out of Mendieta's fertile body, mirroring the natural cycle of life and death.

Ana Mendieta

Untitled: Silueta Series, Iowa

From *Silueta Works in Iowa*, 1976–1978, 1976–78/1991

Colour photograph

Courtesy Estate of Ana Mendieta Collection,
LLC and Galerie Lelong & Co., New York

Ana Mendieta

Árbol de la vida [Tree of Life], 1976

Colour photograph

Courtesy Estate of Ana Mendieta Collection,
LLC and Galerie Lelong & Co., New York

Ana Mendieta's renowned 'earth body' works of the 1970s were sculptural interventions in the landscape in which she placed her body – or its haunting silhouette – in a relationship with nature. In *Árbol de la vida* [Tree of Life], made near Old Mans Creek in Iowa, a site where she made numerous earth and body works, Mendieta plastered herself in an earth-toned, greenish mud before standing with raised arms at the base of a living tree.

Fina Miralles

Relations. Relating the Body and Natural Elements. The Body Covered in Straw [Documentation of a Performance Carried Out in January 1975 in Sabadell, Spain], 1975/1992

Gelatin silver prints

Courtesy of MACBA: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona. Government of Catalonia long-term loan. National Collection of Art.

Fina Miralles's conceptual photo-performance works from the 1970s embody a return to a profound relationship with nature. As she wrote in 1983 following a transformative five-month journey travelling through Argentina, Bolivia and Peru: 'I am abandoning bourgeois culture and embracing indigenous culture. The World Soul, Mother Earth, and the protective and creative Pachamama.' Read through this lens, Miralles's series *Relating the Body and Natural Elements*, in which the artist cocoons herself in straw, as seen here, or surrenders her body to sand or grass until she disappears, her body merging with the land, illustrates Donna Haraway's concept of 'becoming with' and offers a metaphysics grounded in connection, challenging the illusion of separation – the erroneous belief that it is somehow possible to exempt ourselves from earth's ecological community.

Laura Aguilar

Nature Self-Portrait #1, 1996

Gelatin silver print

Collection of Susanne and Jost Vielmetter,
Altadena, CA

For Laura Aguilar, photography was instrumental in visualising her identity, and in the mid-1990s she began creating powerful black-and-white nude self-portraits in nature. In contrast to the heteropatriarchal settler-colonial tradition of landscape photography, Aguilar's portraiture homes in on her identity as a large-bodied, working-class, queer Chicana woman. Mirroring the natural forms of the rocky desert landscape of the American Southwest, in her *Nature Self-Portrait* series Aguilar inserts herself into a 'racially stratified landscape' to become a boulder or perform as a tree. As Macarena Gómez-Barris notes, Aguilar seems to want us 'to trespass into the territory that feminists have long considered taboo by considering a profound relationship between the body and territory, one that provides a possibility for ecology of being in relation to the natural world. In that sense, her self-portraits provide a way to foreground modes of seeing that move away from capitalism, property, and labor altogether, into a more unifying relationality that allows for haptic and sensuous relations with the natural world.' Ultimately, by affiliating her body with the natural beauty of the landscape, Aguilar's work both empowers and transcends the various categories of her identification.

Laura Aguilar

Nature Self-Portrait #4, 1996

Gelatin silver print

Lent by the Tate Americas Foundation, courtesy of the
Latin American Acquisitions Committee 2021

Laura Aguilar

Nature Self-Portrait #5, 1996

Gelatin silver print

The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Laura Aguilar

Nature Self-Portrait #7, 1996

Gelatin silver print

Collection of Susanne and Jost Vielmetter,
Altadena, CA

In these works, Aguilar photographs herself resting beside large boulders that seem to echo her curvaceous bodily form. Facing away from the camera, and folded inward, her body emulates the cracks and dents of the boulders while the shadows cast from her body intensify the affinity with the stones before her. In a sense, she has 'grounded' herself in a landscape that oscillates with the 'largeness of her own body'.

Laura Aguilar

Nature Self-Portrait #12, 1996

Gelatin silver print

Collection of Susanne and Jost Vielmetter,
Altadena, CA

Laura Aguilar

Nature Self-Portrait #9, 1996

Gelatin silver print

Lent by the Tate Americas Foundation, courtesy of the
Latin American Acquisitions Committee 2021

Tee A. Corinne

Isis in the Sand, c. 1986/2023

Digital gelatin silver resin print

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

Explicitly aligning the female body with nature, the lesbian separatist photographer Tee A. Corinne's series *Isis* depicts vulvas seamlessly camouflaged into the landscape of Oregon. Corinne nestles vulvas into tree trunks, along rocky coasts and amid cloud formations so that they occupy the centre of the image; these body parts are cleverly paired with similar textures in the environment, from wrinkled tree bark to rippling water, so that they fuse to create an ecologically eroticised landscape. Here, Corinne's yonic imagery passes for geological formations, again tying the female body to nature. These photomontaged vulvas are disembodied from the human – feminising and eroticising earth, trees and skies – and cast land as a potential lesbian lover. Ultimately, Corinne's *Isis* series intervenes in the landscape to reimagine the land as alive and erotic, and, most importantly, as female.

Tee A. Corinne

Isis in the Tree, c. 1986/2023

Digital gelatin silver resin print

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

Tee A. Corinne

Isis in the Sky, c. 1986/2023

Digital gelatin silver resin print

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

Tee A. Corinne

Isis in the Woods, c. 1986/2023

Digital gelatin silver resin print

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

Tee A. Corinne

Isis in the Water, c. 1986/2023

Digital gelatin silver resin print

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

Tee A. Corinne

Isis in the Ivy, c. 1986/2023

Digital gelatin silver resin print

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

Tee A. Corinne

Tide Pool Isis, c. 1986/2023

Digital gelatin silver resin print

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

Tee A. Corinne

Isis in the Woods, c. 1986/2023

Digital gelatin silver resin print

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

Tee A. Corinne

Untitled, 1981/2023

Digital gelatin silver resin print

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

Tee A. Corinne

Untitled, date unknown (printed 2023)

Digital gelatin silver resin print

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

Tee A. Corinne

Fish Pond, 1991/2023

Fly Away Home: Path and Gate, 1992/2023

Untitled, date unknown (printed 2023)

Digital gelatin silver resin prints

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its
Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives

In her book *The Little Houses on Women's Lands*, Corinne notes that while many women pass temporarily through the lesbian separatist communities of Southern Oregon, 'the structures stay, change, grow, get repaired. They are the touchstones, the building blocks of a common language, repositories of our group memory.'

Tee A. Corinne

All *Untitled*, date unknown (printed 2023)

Digital gelatin silver resin prints

Courtesy of University of Oregon on behalf of its Libraries,
Special Collections and University Archives

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Italy, 1977–78

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print
Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman's work explores issues of gender and the self through the medium of photography by looking at the representation of the body and, more specifically, how her own body relates to the world and her immediate architectural and natural environment. Woodman is well known for depictions of her own body in deserted domestic interiors in which she merges with or dissolves into her surroundings – often using slow exposures to blur and hide her form – in a complex folding of the organic body into the inorganic milieu. In contrast, the works gathered here reflect on 'Woodman's early exploration of camouflage as a feminist strategy' as she entwines, entangles and weaves her body with and through the natural world – which is itself in a constant state of change and becoming. The photographs show Woodman mimicking forms in the environment, concealing herself among the roots of old-growth trees, suturing herself to the skin of the earth or cocooned in a tree, forming a symbiotic fusion between her body and its ecological surroundings.

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Andover, Massachusetts, 1972–74

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print
Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Andover, Massachusetts, 1972–74

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print
Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Andover, Massachusetts, 1972–74

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print
Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Andover, Massachusetts, 1972–74

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print
Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Boulder, Colorado, 1972–75

Gelatin silver estate print
Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Italy, 1977–78

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print
Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Anatella, Italy, 1977–78

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print
Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled from Angel series,

Rome, Italy, 1977–78

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print

Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman

Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Italy, 1978

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print

Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman

Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Italy, 1978

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print

Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman

Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

*Untitled, MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, New
Hampshire, 1980*

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print

Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman

Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

*Untitled, MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, New
Hampshire, 1980*

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print

Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman

Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Newport, Rhode Island, 1976

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print

Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Newport, Rhode Island, 1976

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print

Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Francesca Woodman

Untitled, Providence, Rhode Island, 1976

Gelatin silver estate print, Museum print

Estate of Francesca Woodman; Woodman
Family Foundation

Laura Grisi

The Measuring of Time, 1969

Black-and-white digital video from 16mm film, 5:36 mins
Courtesy of the Laura Grisi Estate, Rome, and P420,
Bologna

In this film, the artist is captured slowly counting out grains of sand to measure the passing of time. Starting from a tightly cropped close-up of the artist's hands, the image slowly expands outwards to reveal the figure performing the action. The camera moves around the artist in a spiral motion, leaving a trace of the cameraperson's feet in the sand. The spiral shape is reminiscent of Robert Smithson's earthwork *Spiral Jetty* (1970), made in the same period. Where Smithson's earthwork imprints a sense of permanence onto nature, Grisi's work is always underscored by the body's ephemeral touch, from the way the sand blows off the artist's fingers to the cameraperson's transient footprints.

Barbara Hammer

Place Mattes, 1987

Digital video from 16mm film, colour, sound, 7:36 mins

Sound score by Terry Setter

Courtesy of Electronic Arts Intermix, New York

In this short film by Barbara Hammer, a pioneer of queer cinema and a feminist filmmaker, parts of the artist's body are superimposed on top of images of the landscape in Puget Sound, Yosemite National Park and the Yucatán Peninsula, before she settles inside a restaurant. Using optical printing – a process that involves linking a film projector to a camera – Hammer flattens two image planes together: the figurative images of the artist's hands and limbs are layered as mattes on a ground made up of scenes of the natural environment. Continually trying to touch the landscapes that flutter past and yet always failing to attain physical impact, the filmic image and its attempts at representation come to symbolise the impossibility of fully containing the natural world.

The Neo Naturists (Jennifer Binnie)

Autumn in Folkington, 1981

Filmed by Grayson Perry

Super 8 film transferred to digital format,
silent, 3:46 mins

Courtesy of The Neo Naturist Archive

Jennifer Binnie's short film *Autumn in Folkington*, shot on Super 8 film by her then boyfriend Grayson Perry in East Sussex, documents a ritualistic performance orbiting around ideas of other-than-humans and nature, death and rebirth, and feminine power. Performing naked and seemingly alone in a forest clearing, protected by her two hounds and with her body smeared in red ochre pigment, the artist imprints herself on the earth before becoming submerged under a pile of autumnal leaves. Finally, she sets the scene ablaze, referencing the possibility of renewal that fire affords while also calling to mind its destructive qualities.

Judy Chicago

Purple Atmosphere

Fireworks performance, performed on Santa Barbara Beach, Santa Barbara, California, 1969

Archival pigment print

Private Collection, Germany

Judy Chicago

Smoke Bodies

Fireworks performance, performed in the California desert, 1972

From the series *Women and Smoke*, 1971–72

Archival pigment print

Private Collection, Germany

A riot of violet, magenta and orange smoke erupts across the Californian desert as women, whose bodies are painted head to toe in what the feminist artist Judy Chicago has called the 'orgasmic capacity of colour', float in and out of these billowing

plumes that gently caress the surrounding landscape.

Women and Smoke (1971–72), part of Chicago's larger *Atmospheres* series (1968–74), resituates women in concord with the natural world while puffs of smoke feminise the landscape. The works' immaterial, fleeting and impermanent form was conceived in direct opposition to the monumental Land art interventions of her male contemporaries, such as Robert Smithson and Michael Heizer.

Judy Chicago

Immolation

Fireworks performance by Faith Wilding, performed in the California desert, 1972

From the series *Women and Smoke*, 1971–72

Archival pigment print

Private Collection, Germany

In *Immolation*, Chicago captures the performance artist Faith Wilding sitting cross-legged in the desert, enveloped in orange smoke. This work referenced the ongoing Vietnam War, the self-immolation of Buddhist monks, and similar acts by people in the United States, who were setting themselves alight to protest the war and advocate for peace, while the orange smoke alludes to Agent Orange, the herbicide that was sprayed to devastating effect in Vietnam.

Judy Chicago

Woman with Orange Flares

Fireworks performance, performed outside Los Angeles, California, 1972

From the series *Women and Smoke*, 1971–72

Archival pigment print

Courtesy the artist, Salon 94, New York and Jessica Silverman, San Francisco

The Neo Naturists (Christine Binnie, Jennifer Binnie and Wilma Johnson)

Black Rapport Day, with B2 Gallery, Thames Beach, Wapping, 1982

C-type prints

The Neo Naturist Archive

Using their fleshy bodies to explore gender and identity, The Neo Naturists (comprising sisters Christine and Jennifer Binnie and Wilma Johnson) are a performance art group who came together in London in 1981, during the heady days of the New Romantic club scene with which they were affiliated. Having met through art school, they bonded over their shared desire to experiment with body painting and expand the use of paint beyond the confines of the canvas. Decorating their bodies in vivid colours and patterns that referenced 'themes of seasonal cycles, fertility cults and the pattern of death and rebirth', their riotous performances were unabashedly lo-fi, vernacular events. *Black Rapport Day* was performed as part of a week-long residency at David Dawson's B2 Gallery in Wapping, east London. It consisted of participants painting themselves in black body paint and only consuming black food and drink, such as black pudding, black olives, black bread, burnt food and Guinness. Fusing the urban wasteland of the former docklands area with ideas of modernist mark-making, The Neo Naturists explored their interest in the liberating potential of ancient feminist pagan rituals.

The Neo Naturists (Christine Binnie, Jennifer Binnie and Wilma Johnson)

Neo Naturist Archive Storage Vessel 3, Thames Beach Wapping, 2008

Earthenware with slip decoration and ceramic decals

Courtesy of Christine Binnie

The Neo Naturists (Christine Binnie, Jennifer Binnie and Wilma Johnson)

Red Ochre Menstrual Sheela Na Gig, 1989

C-print; photographed by Mary Lemley

The Neo Naturist Archive

The Neo Naturists (Christine Binnie, Jennifer Binnie and Wilma Johnson)

Sexist Crabs, with Andrew Logan's *Cosmic Egg*, Tout Quarry Sculpture Park, Portland Bill, Dorset, 1983

Digital gelatin silver resin and C-type prints

The Neo Naturist Archive

While The Neo Naturists frequently performed in nightclubs, at parties and at gallery openings, they increasingly took their performances to outdoor spaces and festivals. *Sexist Crabs*, which they also performed with the choreographer Michael Clark, involved taping seafood to their genitalia and was inspired by the aquatic evolutionary theories in Elaine Morgan's book *The Descent of Woman* (1972), while countering pejorative descriptions of women's labia.

Feminist Land Art Retreat

Heavy Flow, 2015

Single channel video projection, 14:43 mins

Courtesy Feminist Land Art Retreat

Heavy Flow brings the relationship between the body and nature into dialogue with the language of capitalist entrepreneurialism by superimposing a self-help style of narration, instructing the listener on how to take a successful image of oneself (such as a photographic headshot used to gain employment), over a depiction of a volcano spewing lava into its surroundings. The film doubly critiques both the historic masculinity of the Land art tradition and subsequent feminist responses to it by ironically invoking essentialist links between women and nature, specifically relating flowing lava to menstrual blood. Opening with the powerful line 'Create an image', the film offers a tongue-in-cheek suggestion that the binary tropes of second-wave feminism have become branded and commodified for today's market.

Xaviera Simmons

One Day and Back Then (Seated), 2007

Chromogenic colour print

Courtesy the artist and David Castillo, Miami

One Day and Back Then (Seated) is a self-portrait depicting the African American artist Xaviera Simmons sitting in a throne-like wicker chair surrounded by towering sea reeds. These signifiers refer to the legacies of colonialism, playing on visual tropes used in historic representations of slavery. Further, the artist has covered her body in black paint and wears bright red lipstick to parody the techniques of racial caricaturing. The image asks the question of who has traditionally been represented in the disciplines of landscape photography and painting, and who has had the agency to create those depictions. By starkly employing aesthetic signifiers that are used in the representation of the Black body in the American landscape, Simmons explores how any understanding of our relationship with nature is always mediated by historically developed and socially constructed visual forms that shape our comprehension.

RECLAIMING THE COMMONS

Reclaiming the Commons considers the power dynamics of capitalist land ownership, environmental racism, and environmental memory, while reflecting on who has access to our common land, who owns the land and how earth-beings – both human and more-than-human – move through our increasingly enclosed natural world. Notions of ‘the commons’ are grounded in forms of egalitarian land stewardship in which members of a community have access to common land for pasturing animals, growing crops, and foraging, with feminists arguing that the commons are also social and economic sites that are crucial for female empowerment.

Questions of access to land are considered in Fay Godwin’s photographic series *Our Forbidden Land* (1990), which tracks how the long history of enclosures in Britain has shaped a sinister landscape in which fields and pathways are emptied of people through physical barriers, legal measures, and acts of dispossession. Diana Thater’s work *RARE* (2008) investigates the effects of enclosures from an interspecies perspective, focusing on the disappearing habitats of endangered species in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. In *Al río/To the River* (2016–22), Zoe Leonard uses photography to testify to the weaponisation of landscapes through the transformation of waterways such as the Río Bravo/Rio Grande from a source of life and means of migration to a militarised border.

Environmental racism and memory are explored in the work of Ingrid Pollard, Dionne Lee, Mónica de Miranda,

and Xaviera Simmons, who variously interrogate the racialised histories of settler-colonial and plantation landscapes. Their photographs – which are often manipulated with embroidery, collage, hand-tinting, and more – call into question the heteropatriarchal tradition of landscape photography and draw attention to the entwined struggles of decolonisation and the healing of our planet.

Ingrid Pollard

The Valentine Days #5 "Crossing A River, J.V. 13980",
1891/2017

Hand-tinted photographs on giclée paper

Commissioned by Autograph, London

Courtesy of the artist, The Caribbean Photo Archive, and
Autograph, London

Ingrid Pollard's series *The Valentine Days* presents carefully constructed photographic images of Jamaica that were originally produced as postcards to sell the prospect of Jamaica as a site for speculative development during British colonial rule in the late nineteenth-century. While the original postcards, produced by the Scottish company Valentine & Sons, depict romanticised landscapes of exotic vegetation, watery scenes of rivers and forests, and agricultural labourers and women tending the land, Pollard's sensitive hand-tinting intervenes to disrupt their intended reading, drawing the viewer's attention to the colonial power dynamics at play and the extraction of both the land and the people.

Ingrid Pollard

The Valentine Days #2 "Gordon Town, J.V. 19328", 1891/2017

Hand-tinted photographs on giclée paper

Commissioned by Autograph, London

Courtesy of the artist, The Caribbean Photo Archive,
and Autograph, London

Ingrid Pollard

The Valentine Days #3 "Ferry on Rio Cobre, J.V. 13923",
1891/2017

Hand-tinted photographs on giclée paper

Commissioned by Autograph, London

Courtesy of the artist, The Caribbean Photo Archive,
and Autograph, London

Zoe Leonard

From Casa de Adobe, Ciudad Juárez, 2018/2022

From the series *Al río / To the River*,
2016–2022

6 gelatin silver prints

Courtesy of the artist and Hauser & Wirth

Zoe Leonard's six-year-long project *Al río / To the River* takes the Río Bravo / Rio Grande, which both unites and divides Mexico and the United States, as its subject. Travelling across this 2,000-kilometre stretch of river, Leonard examines how the waterway has been weaponised by state actors as a tool to disconnect – in opposition to the river's inherent nature to meander, connect and converge places, spaces and communities. Through her forensically studied black-and-white photographs, Leonard shows how the rich plurality of social activity that takes place along the river cuts against the binary demarcations of political borders. Reflecting on ideas of surveillance, borderlands, migration, refuge and refugees, climate change, agricultural geo-logics and military zones, *Al río / To the River* bears witness to how the boundaries we create – between people, nature and politics – are more fluid than we think.

Fay Godwin

Untitled ['This is your drinking water' sign]

From the series *Our Forbidden Land*, 1990

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy The British Library

Fay Godwin's black-and-white photographs of the British landscape emphasise the enclosure of the land by the military-industrial-agricultural-nuclear-corporate complex, the landed gentry and the heritage industry. Focusing on the alienation and exclusion of the public from our 'common' land, Godwin's documentary images draw critical attention to the material impact of primitive accumulation on our shared landscape. Traversing the length of Britain, from Stonehenge and Greenham Common to Glencoe, as president of the Ramblers Association, Godwin actively advocated and campaigned for greater public access to the land. Her searing depiction of decaying paths, menacing signage warning against trespassing and barbed wire fences underscores her concern around the degree to which such access had become restricted.

Fay Godwin

Brassington, Derbyshire

From the series *Our Forbidden Land*, 1990

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy The British Library

Fay Godwin

The Duke of Westminster's Estate,
Forest of Bowland.

From the series *Our Forbidden Land*, 1990

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy The British Library

Fay Godwin

Untitled ['Public footpath' sign in grass]

From the series *Our Forbidden Land*, 1990

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy The British Library

Fay Godwin

Untitled ['Public footpath' sign in water]

From the series *Our Forbidden Land*, 1990

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy The British Library

Fay Godwin

Greenham Common

From the series *Our Forbidden Land*, 1990

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy The British Library

Fay Godwin

Footpaths illegally closed by the military at Lydd

From the series *Our Forbidden Land*, 1990

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy The British Library

Fay Godwin

Footpath reopened under duress at Lydd
From the series *Our Forbidden Land*, 1990

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy The British Library

Fay Godwin

Pop-up target, Stanford training area, Norfolk
From the series *Our Forbidden Land*, 1990

Gelatin silver print

Courtesy The British Library

Mónica de Miranda

Salt Island, 2022

Inkjet prints on cotton paper and embroidered
cotton thread

Courtesy of the artist

Composed of five meticulously embroidered photographic prints depicting a verdant landscape, *Salt Island* forms part of Mónica de Miranda's larger multimedia project *The Island* (2022), a space of fabulation that exists somewhere between fact and fiction and refers to the 'Ilha dos Pretos' (Island of Black Men), an oral name given in the eighteenth century to a community of enslaved people of African origin who settled on the banks of the river Sado in southern Portugal. De Miranda's work considers the complex experience of Afrodiasporic lives and Europe's colonial past through a Black ecofeminist lens, drawing on ideas of matrilineal relationships, kinship, migration, slavery and African liberation movements. Here, de Miranda furthers our relationship with nature by considering rocks and cliff formations as repositories of human experiences and memories. Intrinsicly linked to colonial excavation, they are witnesses of past and ongoing ancestral and ecological trauma in the form of gender-based violence against bodies and lands.

Xaviera Simmons

Red (Number One), 2016

Chromogenic colour print

Courtesy of the artist and David Castillo, Miami

In *Red (Number One)*, Xaviera Simmons interrupts the grandeur of an arid landscape in the American West by introducing her own figure into the centre of the frame, nestled between three collaged boards, one of which comprises a selection of images of Jamaican dance halls drawn from her personal archive. The inclusion of these liberated, gyrating, joyful bodies into this settler-colonial space evokes ideas of corporeal emancipation, while the presence of the artist, looking out beyond the frame, critically recalls the colonial male gaze surveying the land and viewing it as ripe for imperial expansion. Placed on an easel, a second collage includes aerial shots of various landscapes, close-up images of the surface of the moon, women carrying towers of baskets on their heads, and trucks brimming with people and African artefacts, together resembling a Warburgian image-atlas that speaks to ideas of migration, cartography and identity. By inserting her body and these unfamiliar elements into the landscape, Simmons eschews the male-dominated tradition of American landscape photography.

Dionne Lee

A Plot that Also Grounds, 2016

Archival pigment print

Courtesy of the artist

Combining found imagery from survival manuals, old copies of *National Geographic* and her own prints, Dionne Lee's multilayered collage work interrogates the racialised conditions of the American landscape. She explores the profound structural inequalities laid down by a long history of unequal power relationships in the USA, particularly in relation to the land, climate justice, environmental racism and memory, thinking through legacies such as the unfulfilled promise of 'forty acres and a mule' to freed slaves in 1865, and the navigation of the land northwards by those who made their escape on the Underground Railroad. Lee often inserts her own body into the landscape, referencing the histories of her ancestors who toiled the land for centuries but whose knowledge of the environment has been lost over time owing to a lack of access and migration. Hands are a recurring motif in her work, often used as a tool for navigating the land by searching the sky for the North Star. These bodily gestures serve to reclaim her ancestors' wisdom and can be read as acts of resistance against institutional and environmental racism.

Dionne Lee

Breaking the Fall, 2016

Archival pigment print

Courtesy of the artist

Dionne Lee

Contact (A Muscle Memory), 2016

Collage of silver gelatin prints, paper, graphite

Courtesy of the artist

Dionne Lee

Trespass is the most beautiful word, 2016

Archival pigment print

Courtesy of the artist

Gauri Gill and Rajesh Vangad

Gods of the Home and Village, 2015

From the series *Fields of Sight*,
2013–ongoing

Acrylic paint on archival pigment print

Courtesy of the artists and Deutsche Bank Collection

At the heart of Gauri Gill and Rajesh Vangad's collaborative photo-painting series *Fields of Sight* are tales of the earth, nature and animals, the gods of hills, trees, homes and villages, and, of course, Rajesh Vangad himself, who appears as a speculative figure in each work. Vangad's gaze is more often than not turned away from the viewer as he contemplates a landscape beyond our knowledge and reach. In marrying Gill's black-and-white images of contemporary urban and rural landscapes with Vangad's expressive Warli drawings, which roam freely across the photographic surface, the duo reflect on the strata of space and time and how they intersect with an imperialist and ecological history and an oppressive present. Bearing witness to an environment that is in a constant state of flux and the destruction of habitat that threatens the lived realities of India's Indigenous (Adivasi) population, *Fields of Sight* offers a means of recording the complex processes of the Anthropocene that are otherwise difficult to detect. Vangad's geometric drawings, which are informed by traditional Warli painting, are teeming with life, while circles represent the sun and the moon, triangles denote mountains and trees and the square signifies a sacred enclosure or piece of land.

Gauri Gill and Rajesh Vangad

Tree of Monkey Ancestors, 2015

From *the series Fields of Sight*, 2013–ongoing

Acrylic paint on archival pigment print

Private collection, Athens, Greece

Diana Thater

Rare, 2008

Single-channel video display ×4 configuration
of 16 flat screen LCD monitors

Courtesy the artist and David Zwirner

Filmed in 2007 at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (formerly Greater St Lucia Wetland Park) in KwaZulu-Natal, on South Africa's east coast, Diana Thater's film *RARE*, presented across an offset grid of sixteen flat-panel monitors, investigates the disappearing habitats of rhinoceros, elephants, giraffes and baboons, among other critters, the detrimental impact of industrialisation and urban encroachment on their survival, and speciescides.

Unravelling the knotty dynamics between human and non-human beings, the subject of Thater's film is, as she says, 'the relationship between the animals, their environment and me, the filmmaker'. The offset grid, which grants the viewer only ever a partial glimpse of these majestic critters, amplifies the brokenness of our connection to our 'companion species' and underscores the dangers of human exceptionalism.

Zina Saro-Wiwa

Karikpo Pipeline, 2015

Five-channel video, 25:18 mins

Courtesy of the artist

Karikpo Pipeline is a multi-screen video installation by the Nigerian US-based artist Zina Saro-Wiwa, that draws on Ogoni masquerade traditions in the Niger Delta, in which young male performers take on the bodies and athletic movements of antelope as part of a fertility ceremony. By situating and filming the performers on the visible remnants of oil extraction infrastructure in Ogoniland – and also creating the *karikpo* antelope masks from petroleum-based resin rather than the customary wood – Saro-Wiwa reimagines the place as a complex and shifting interaction between animist and extractivist spirits. In so doing, she asks complex questions about Ogoni survivance that are unique to the people and place and that resist incorporation into Eurowestern narratives of environmental and climate politics. Through this work, Saro-Wiwa insists that Indigenous cultural survival is an essential part of ecological recovery.

LIQUID BODIES

Liquid Bodies explores the relationships between the human cultures of gender and sexuality and the world of water. The works assembled here imagine a relationship between human animals and the non-human world that rejects the dualisms of 'natural and unnatural', 'alive and not alive', or 'human and non-human' – colonial ways of seeing that divide the world into humans and everything else. Rather, the artists in this section start from a simple point of departure: we, too, are water. They look to the potential of this natural resource to destabilise a binary sense of gender and the categorisation of the world into neat taxonomies that shape conventional Western ideas of the human experience.

Ideas of watery immersion, submersion, and transformation unite the work of Nadia Huggins, Anne Duk Hee Jordan, Josèfa Ntjam, Ada M. Patterson, and Uýra. Cross-species becoming is explored in the Indigenous queer artist Uýra's arresting photo-performances, in which the artist fuses with Amazonian plants, creating what she describes as hybrids of human, animal, and plant. Nadia Huggins' striking self-portraits depict her becoming one with the corals that hug the coast of her Caribbean home.

Playing out in the vast continuum of oceanic space, Anne Duk Hee Jordan's film *Ziggy and the Starfish* (2018) depicts marine life as powerfully sensual. Bobbing along to a soundtrack culled from vintage erotic films and underwater sounds, it considers the porous boundaries of multispecies kinship that is presented as endlessly subversive. Colonial, mythic, and queer histories of water are further addressed in Josèfa Ntjam's installation that considers Black being in the afterlives of Atlantic slavery.

Josèfa Ntjam

Unknown Aquazone, 2020

Metal structure, Plexiglas, clay, neons, 2 screens

Commissioned by Palais de Tokyo, Paris

Courtesy of the artist and NICOLETTI, London

Unknown Aquazone draws upon water-related mythologies, from Mami Wata, voodoo figures and fish-woman divinities, to imagine speculative futures. The work is named after Detroit techno duo Drexciya's fourth EP (1994), which built upon the musicians' imagined technological universe comprising an underwater society formed by the offspring of pregnant African women who were thrown overboard from the ships that traversed the Atlantic during the slave trade. Ntjam combines imagery relating to this and other aquatic mythologies with archival materials that depict revolutionaries who fought for Cameroonian independence, creating large photomontages that are printed on the sides of an 'aquarium'.

Ada M. Patterson

Looking for 'Looking for Langston', 2021

Digital C-prints

Courtesy of Maria Korolevskaya and
Copperfield, London

Looking for 'Looking for Langston' by Ada M. Patterson is both inspired by and directly references Isaac Julien's eponymous 1989 film, which offers a meditation on the life of the queer poet Langston Hughes and the wider cultural scene of the Harlem Renaissance in 1920s New York. As the title of the work suggests, Patterson, whose quest to learn more about the film ended in failure, constructs her own response that borrows from Hughes's poetic imaginary as well as fragments she gleaned about Julien's film. The result is a surreal and phantasmagoric exploration of Blackness and desire, using symbols such as the sailor and the sea to explore the fluidity of queerness. Patterson's film also incorporates allusions to the histories of colonialism extant not only in Barbados (the artist's birthplace and where this film was mostly shot) but also in Hughes's United States and Julien's United Kingdom. The film pays homage to these forebears, connected through oceanic bodies, legacies of Blackness and queerness, and the forever speculative pursuit of desire.

Uýra

Comer de Si Mesma e Fogo (To Eat of Oneself and Fire),
2018

Inkjet print on Hahnemühle photo rag paper
Courtesy of the artist

Uýra is an Indigenous artist, biologist and educator from Brazil who works in and around the riverine communities of the Amazon region. In these photo-performances, Uýra transforms into multispecies characters, fluidly merging the human and nonhuman by adorning herself with organic matter. Borrowing from the aesthetic language of drag and its ability to disrupt the stasis of gender-normativity, Uýra exuberantly shows how other binaries, such as the one between humans and nature, can also be understood to be fluid states that are performatively constructed. As an educator, Uýra also uses her works as pedagogical tools to uncover different forms of knowledge about the land that have been suppressed by the logic of Western extractive capitalism. In doing so, the works call for a material and spiritual restoration of the ravaged ecologies to which we belong.

Uýra

Lama (Mud), 2018

From the series *Elementar* (Elemental), 2018

Inkjet print on Hahnemühle photo rag paper
Courtesy of the artist

Uýra

Terra Pelada (Naked Earth), 2019

Inkjet print on Hahnemühle photo rag paper
Courtesy of the artist

Nadia Huggins

Transformations 1, 2015

Printed on Chromaluxe (white gloss)

Courtesy of the artist

Nadia Huggins

Transformations 9, 2015

Printed on Chromaluxe (white gloss)

Courtesy of the artist

Anne Duk Hee Jordan

Ziggy and the Starfish, 2022

Installation comprised of wooden structure,
blue carpet, bean bags, hammocks and shrimp pillows,
HD video, sound, 16:28 mins

Commissioned by The Polygon Gallery, Canada

Courtesy of Anne Duk Hee Jordan and
Alexander Levy, Berlin

Taking its name from Ziggy Stardust, the androgynous, extraterrestrial rock star persona that musician David Bowie embodied in the early 1970s, Anne Duk Hee Jordan's sculptural video environment that houses the film *Ziggy and the Starfish* (2018) celebrates the fluidity of marine life sexuality. The film pictures the sexual exploits of various ocean creatures with an exuberance and playful excitement, recalling the earlier work of the French photographer and filmmaker of marine life Jean Painlevé. The effects of human-made climate change on the hydrosphere have become a key factor impacting the reproductive lives of marine animals, and by focusing on this aspect of the ecosphere Jordan underscores our deep entwinement with our fellow earthly inhabitants. In response to the present ecological crisis, the work offers a portal into the vivid world of our nonhuman cohabitators and looks to their colourful erotic lives as an example of how to not only think against binary dualisms, but to desire the seductively plural.

Anne Duk Hee Jordan

Nudi, 2018

Mixed media textiles

Courtesy of Anne Duk Hee Jordan and
Alexander Levy, Berlin

Anne Duk Hee Jordan

Elysia, The Beheaded Nudi, 2018

Mixed media textiles

Courtesy of Anne Duk Hee Jordan and
Alexander Levy, Berlin

Anne Duk Hee Jordan

Sea Pig, 2018

Mixed media textiles

Courtesy of Anne Duk Hee Jordan and
Alexander Levy, Berlin