

In un vuoto cielo *In an empty sky*

18.11.2023 — 13.01.2024

Adele Dipasquale e Hunter Longe

Curated by Giacomo Galletti and Gabriel Stöckli

A kite rises into flight from a field being harvested. Wheeling in the sky, it glides over vast marble deposits, perhaps drawn by glints of sunlight reflecting on the glass of the excavators. The sound of footsteps on the volcanic soil of Mount Etna dissolves into the echo of sea waves. This sonic amalgamation is sent through amplifiers into the electrical system powering the LED lights of the Sonnenstube space, causing the illumination of the rooms to flicker. Solar panels, connected to speakers, reconvert light impulses into sound, generating an almost synesthetic experience. This work, titled "Fuochi Fatui", is a collaboration between Dipasquale and Longe, immersing the visitors in an atmosphere that subtly intertwines the connections between their own artistic practices.

This electroacoustic apparatus is something that Longe has worked with in previous installations, yet for the occasion, he has invited Dipasquale to inhabit it with the various audio tracks from her 16mm film titled "Blossoms and Fruits at Once". Shot in 2019, the film is a journey to specific locations where the materials needed to create a Winogradsky column can be found. Starting from this positivist experiment of the late 19th century, whose purpose was to recreate the early stages of bacterial life on Earth, Dipasquale critically reflects on the human desire to reach a hypothetical primordial state and a supposed origin of life. This aspiration to a time when nature nourishes humans effortlessly, where flowers and fruits grow simultaneously, disrupting the progression of seasons, has always been a dangerous myth, in which the female gender, along with all marginalized categories associated with a presumed "naturalness", has had to pay a very high price.

The rooms of Sonnenstube are transported, as if possessed by supernatural phenomena, into an eerie dimension, yet capable of conveying a calming and soothing atmosphere. The visitor moves among the works in a space marked by the irregular rhythm of the light, as if moving between out-of-sync film frames. Trapped in a strange interplay of dimensions and scales, one can immerse oneself by traversing Longe's small sculptures into the vastness of geological eras, experiencing a sense of vertigo while looking back in time, but subsequently finding the familiarity of forms reminiscent of present-day technological product packaging. This juxtaposition triggers visions of a future irreversibly conditioned by human activity.

3.5 billion years ago, before any living creature traversed the skies or walked the soils of this planet, the first cyanobacterial life forms began, releasing oxygen into the atmosphere and triggering the oxidation of metals present at the surface of the Earth. This event, called the 'Great Oxidation,' contributed to the formation of approximately 2,500 new mineral species. In his work, Hunter Longe investigates the geological and biological co-evolution, while appropriating apparatuses from the sciences and flirting with the esoteric and folkloric. An example of this is the work "Vegetative Art", where a drawing of one of these ancient life forms is reproduced with graphite on polystyrene and then applied to a red iron-rich rock, emphasizing their connection.

Turning the corner, from where the barely recognizable imprint of thermoformed packaging can be glimpsed, a green laser highlights the slight protrusions of the wall, revealing an invisible landscape. The plaster sculpture, like a petrified specter or ectoplasm, evokes limestone karst landscapes, whose irregular and bulging forms are caused by the geological process of dissolution, where the less dense areas of the rock dissolve and erode under the force of water. This

work and the one placed on the doorframe are titled "Dissolution of the State", suggesting that human political organizations may be subject to terrestrial entropic forces too. Mimicking the geologic process, these two works were cast directly into the sediments of the riverbanks near the artist's studio in Geneva.

On the CRT monitor, hands can be seen pounding on a table, while during a seance, an ectoplasm emerges from a woman's mouth, but remains trapped by the screen's glass. Dipasquale's work "Spirit Talks" consists of an ongoing series of silent 16mm films. These videos draw inspiration from the archival material of late 19th-century 'spirit photography,' a time when, alongside the invention and dissemination of the photographic medium, a great interest in spiritualism arose. At that time, many mediums attracted the attention of the positivist scientific community, which sought to use photography to prove or disprove their magical evocations. For Dipasquale, this event represents the clash between two different reality-systems: on one side, the scientific community of the time that aspired to classify and name the real, and on the other, mediumship as a profession, a way to make a living and a craft. It is the need to manufacture 'authentic' images of spirit sessions and the consequent experimental technical devices that interest Dipasquale.

As if escaping one of these evocations, a mysterious smoky light spreads from a small fragment of rock in the adjacent room. "Immolation" is composed of a specimen of rock from a Neolithic to Iron Age place of worship in Goldbichl, Austria. At this site, the bodies of countless goats, cattle, and sheep were sacrificed in fire. The repeated burning of animals on an altar made of soil and rock caused apatite, a mineral present in bones, to fuse with the rock, thus creating, through human action, microscopic crystals of previously nonexistent mineral species.

In "Tracer", the trace left by a small being in the sand is immortalized by the cast performed by the artist, as if to find or decrypt a message left over time. Some almost sketch-like features, added in tinted epoxy clay, simulate the wandering among the grains of a crawling creature. In the room, as the footsteps echo incessantly among the Silvestri craters of the Sicilian volcano, these words scrolling on the screen can be glimpsed:

*The time of maggots,
the pace of plants and leaves
what if heat would have been the measure,
and distances assessed by the shivering,
the stroking of one with another.
A pounding on the surface, a flickering light being mirrored.*

GG



Adele Dipasquale (IT, 1994) is a visual artist and researcher currently based in The Hague (NL), where they have graduated from the MA Artistic Research at the Royal Academy of Arts KABK in 2020. Recent exhibitions include: Page Not Found (NL), The Clemente (US), WORM (NL), Oberhausen Film Festival (DL), Marres (NL), Het Nieuwe Instituut (NL), HomeCinema (NL), ArtauCentre (BL), Filmhuis (NL), 1646 (NL), Beursschouwburg (BL). Their work is supported by Mondriaan Fonds and Stroom Den Haag for the year 2022-23.

www.adeledipasquale.com

Hunter Longe (California 1985)

Lives and works in Geneva, Switzerland.

He holds a Bachelor of Fine Art degree from the California College of the Arts (San Francisco, USA) and a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Piet Zwart Institute (Rotterdam, NL). His work has been exhibited in both group and solo shows in numerous spaces and institutions including: Kunsthaus Langenthal (CH), Istituto

Svizzero (Rome, IT), Last Tango (Zurich CH), Smallville (Neuchatel CH), Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève (Geneva, CH), PACE Gallery (Geneva, CH), No-Moon (New York, USA), LambdaLambdaLambda (Pristina, XK), W139 (Amsterdam, NL), One Gee in Fog (Geneva, CH). He won the Swiss Art Prize in 2021.

www.hunterlonge.com

Sonnenstube is an independent art space founded in 2013, based in Lugano, offering regular, flexible and sometimes unexpected program. Sonnenstube is directed by Giacomo Galletti (1993, curator), Giada Olivotto (1990, curator), Sandro Pianetti (1987, artist and interaction designer), Gabriel Stöckli (1991, artist), Gianmaria Zanda (1985, artist and musician)

Sonnenstube Offspace

Villa Florida

Via Mazzini 20

6900 Lugano

www.diesonnenstube.ch

@sonnenstube.offspace

hello@diesonnenstube.ch