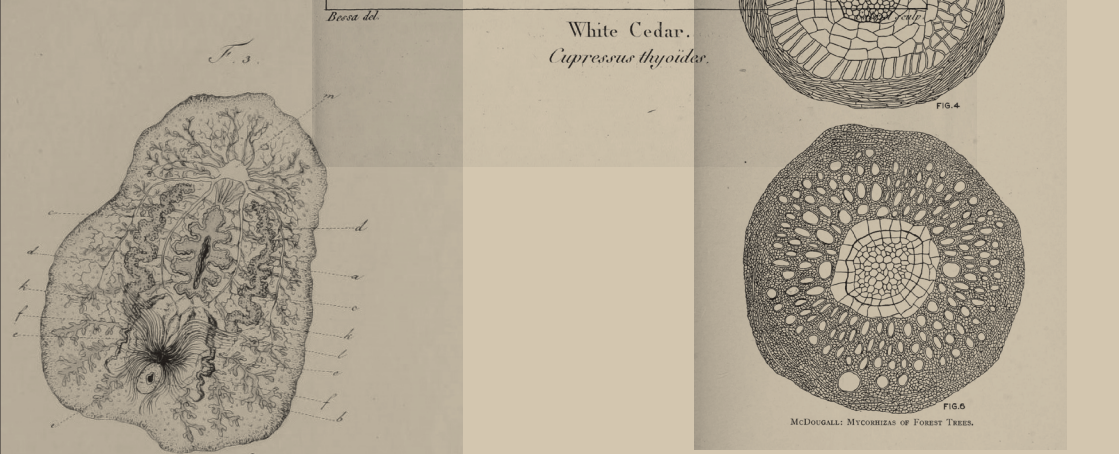
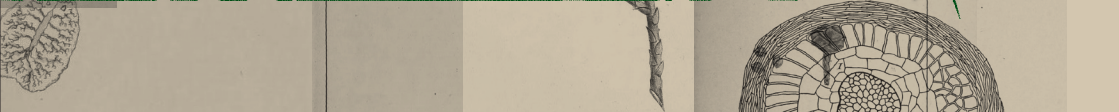


A...kademie der bildenden Künste Wien Exhibit Galerie Bordering Plants

EN



Boiss del.

White Cedar.
Cupressus thyoides.

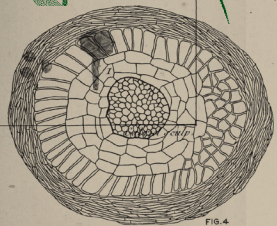


FIG. 4

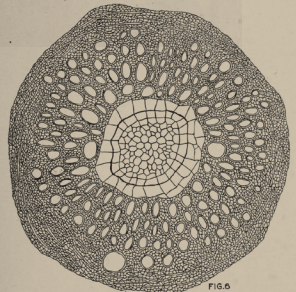


FIG. 5

McDUGALL: MYCORRHIZAS OF FOREST TREES.

A...kademie der bildenden Künste Wien
Exhibit Galerie
Bordering Plants
10.11.2023–18.2.2024

With contributions by

Basurama (Mónica Gutiérrez Herrero), Alán Carrasco, Ava Binta Giallo, Agustín Ortiz Herrera, laschulas (Angélica Castelló, Natalia Domínguez Rangel, Lorena Moreno Vera, Lucía Simón Medina), Mary Maggic, Beatriz Santiago Muñoz, Landon Newton, Gianna Virginia Prein, Studio Wild (Tymon Hogenelst, Jesse van der Ploeg), Dusts Institute

With public programs from

Ayesha Hameed, Dusts Institute, The Institute for Postnatural Studies, Resolve Collective

Curators

Carmen Lael Hines, Adam Hudec and Roberto Majano

Exhibition Design

Bilal Alame and Joanna Zabielska

Sponsored by

Acción Cultural Española, The Embassy of Spain in Austria, The Embassy of the United States in Austria, Afterhour Furniture, SANlight, Calienna



Curatorial Statement

“Plants are the most instrumentalised of all forms of life, degraded and overlooked – rethinking our relationship with them must be understood as part of a wider rethinking of our relationship with each other.”¹

“The essence of nature has never changed. We have merely ascribed it to different meanings, tamed it through a succession of visions. By imposing geometric order through miniaturization, we made it appear familiar to us so that, thus constrained, it corresponded to our nature or an ideal thereof. The symbolic value we conferred upon it, enabled us to avoid feeling ‘abandoned’ by nature or to view it as an ‘alien’ threat.”²

The enclosure of public lands in Europe in the 16th century, followed by the rise of Europe as a globally hegemonic civilization, cemented philosophical formations in which *plants* became something to be extracted. Sometime in the 1570s, the word “garden” in English transitioned from noun to verb, as seeds and specimens were taken and transported overseas in glass terrariums such as Wardian Cases³ for cultivation.⁴ Inspired by the writings of decolonial thinkers such as Sylvia Wynter, Walter Dignolo, Alhena Katsof, Shela Sheikh, and Ros Gray, we call this exhibition *Bordering Plants* to link together two epistemic viewpoints: *border* and *plant*. Their writings have shown us that the history of plants in Europe is one entangled in histories of colonialism, global market chains, and the invention of “modernity.”⁵ As much as they may be emblematic of these relations, plants also become living archives and tools for considering the philosophical formations informing what we call “the natural environment,” and what we call “borders.” In this exhibition, we hope to create a laboratory to think about these issues collectively.

Globalization, by definition, continues to produce planetary interconnections through a proliferation of borders. Borders exist for

some, and not others. Borders are enacted, drawn, suspended and contended with. Indeed, borders are not static entities – but epistemological positions. Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Nielson propose that borders not be approached as a fact, but as a “method” for thinking about “cast(ed)” and “recasted relations, (...) of tension and conflict, partition and connection, traversing and barricading, life and death.” Taking cues from this perspective, we proposed, in our open call for projects, an engagement with plants in relation to border as *method*. This is not in any way to suggest that we all live in a borderless world, but instead to critique hegemony by approaching border as a verb, rather than a noun(fact).

First introduced by Gloria Anzaldúa in *Borderlands/La Frontera*, border thinking critiques Western hegemonies of knowledge production by integrating epistemologies cast to the “outside” by border-ing regimes.⁷ Starting from this critical positionality of border as a methodology, what ties the projects in this exhibition together is not only engagement with plants, but plants in relation to borders in an expanded sense, once again, plants as explored through border thinking. In *Architecture of the Forest* by Studio Wild, the border becomes the lines of nation-states – questioned and swelled by an ecosystem of a rapidly industrialized spruce monoculture. In *Of Breath and Sound* by laschulas, the border is an epistemic question of interspecies contamination – experimented on and questioned through performances of breath. As curators, we engage the exhibition as an interface to which *borders as an approach* can be positioned for discussion.

A major part of preparing for this exhibition was developing mechanisms for the plants to be cared for during a period of three months. One of the ways in which this is organized is via a notebook, on display as part of *Scion* by Mónica Gutiérrez Herrero. We invite visitors to touch, engage with, and water the plants – and kindly note down these involvements to ensure their care. Many of the plants in this exhibition have been donated temporarily. In tandem with a seminar in the Department of Visual Cultures at the TU Wien, each plant is an emblem of research into practices of co-habitation.

Each piece in *Bordering Plants*, in varied ways, considers plants in relation to containers and containment. Historically, incubators like the Wardian Case rendered plants as spectacles. They became emblems of colonization – fashioned symbols of produced “exoticism,” decorative ornaments of aristocratic architecture. These containers and the philosophical paradigms behind their conception, mushroomed into different versions of material boundary and incubation: the iron steel of a botanic garden, the wood of a garden fence, the barbed spines of a fence demarcating a field. How to approach this history of spectacle in making an exhibition about plants?

Plants can become objects, as much as they can become “things,” especially if we take the meaning of “things” as something encoded with social values that may evade immediate understanding.⁸ Plants can be placed on tables, plucked from the ground, exchanged as commodities, and dissected in taxonomies. Indeed, the way we understand plants is a product of classification and ontological dissection. These classifications can be potted and arranged in interior environments to decorate, filter, become plastic, or engender plasticity. Taking the garden as scenario, or *moment* of green in urban sprawl, plants may challenge what designates the *inside* from the *outside*, or one area from another.

Plants can carry a kind of unscalability, a potential for growth and overgrowth, that transgress the seams of their containers. When carried overseas over decades of colonial extraction, plants dispersed beyond these hegemonic confines through animal excrement and architectural cracks and crannies. They multiplied outside of their confines. Cradling multiple formations of being and being-with, plants can entangle and interrogate what we call the “built” environment, and trouble conceptions of what is labelled as “the natural.” In proposing new paradigms of ontology, or how things relate, connect or collide, plants are precious tools for thinking about different ways to be. Challenging the boundaries of the human/non-human, interior/exterior, the built/unbuilt, the potted/the spontaneous, the seamless/the awkward, plants may be a tool to transgress solidified

borders.⁹ When addressing contemporary visual culture, plants often become floating signifiers in an age of climate catastrophe – instrumentalized for *greenwashing*, they can be rendered as emblems of performative political positionalities, while also indicating collective interest towards sustainable forms of co-habitation. As many critics would agree, to ask how we live with plants is to ask how we live together – or more importantly, to perform and practice how we want to live together.

To our delight, each project in this exhibition offers a unique perspective on what we call plants. Beatriz Santiago Muñoz's plants are features of a catalogue for use or non-use. Gianna Prein's plants are the natural rubbers extracted from trees in the Amazon basin for the automobile industry. For Alán Carrasco, plants are the ecosystems and landscapes enclosed between hyper-militarized zones – for Mónica Gutiérrez the household objects that bring us together through mutual practices of maintenance and care. Agustín Ortiz Herrera's plants are dramatized, speculative visions of posthuman assemblages, Mary Maggic's are post-natural, grown without soil, but only through pipe, metal, and light. Landon Newton's plants are infrastructures of care – de-visibility forms of natural contraception and aborticides; for Dusts Institute plants become the regenerative and protective properties in the built environment, and finally, for Ava Binta Giallo, plants are living archives of ancient multi-species linkages.

As a laboratory, the questions proposed in this exhibition will be expanded through four public programs, each led by, respectively, Dr. Ayesha Hameed, Dusts Institute, The Institute for Postnatural Studies, and Resolve Collective. Dr. Hameed's lecture will present her thinking on the epoch of the *Plantatione*. *Dusts Institute* will lead a workshop on biopatina, the naturally growing organisms on the façade of the Academy. The *Institute for Postnatural Studies* will perform an audio-visual lecture on the Metaphysics of Mixture. Finally, *Resolve Collective* will conclude *Bordering Plants* with a workshop/lecture on urban experiment with anthropic wilderness.

In winding through this exhibition, or attending the public programs, we urge the consideration of plants bursting and breaking from the Wardian Case. With projects conceived by makers coming from over thirteen different countries, each work positions a situated viewpoint on one of the most important typologies of our time. Each artist proposes that through plants we can begin to reflect on the philosophical paradigms that dictate what we call “nature.”

- 1 Shela Sheikh and Ros Gray, “The coloniality of planting: Legacies of racism and slavery in the practice of botany,” *The Architectural Review* (January 27, 2021).
- 2 Gerrit Komrij, *Over de noodzaak van tuinieren* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1991), 61. Quoted in: Laurie Cluitmans, “Introduction on the Necessity of Gardening,” *On the Necessity of Gardening*, edited by Laurie Cluitmans (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2021), 13.
- 3 This 19th century early version of a terrarium facilitated the transportation of foreign plants to Europe from colonized territories. A sealed protective container, the object was designed to prevent plants from dying from the stresses of planetary transportation or the toxic air pollution in cities such as London and Paris.
- 4 Alhena Katsof, “Mythological Formations” in: *On the Necessity of Gardening*, edited by Laurie Cluitmans (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2021), 23.
- 5 For the purposes of this exhibition, we define plants as a living entity or its representation characterized by multicellularity and the ability to photosynthesize.
- 6 Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Nielson, *The Border as Method, or, The Multiplication of Labour* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).
- 7 Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987).
- 8 Bill Brown, *Things* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).
- 9 Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006).

Artworks

if () {
} else {

Gianna Virginia Prein, 2023
Natural rubber, pigment, wooden substructure

*on brazil's beaches lie rubber blocks
salty printed with product-of characters.
air-filled wheel rattling: a beginning of many
for the production of insulation material, uniforms,*

*tires pulled to smooth sandy soil
in front of borders.
muffled return of tropical boom
stranded from 6000 meters deep
from the wreck of the german blockade runner ms "rio grande"
from the tears of an old amazon basin tree – at least three
time zones long –*

*deploring close quarters, left for other continents or
from the flood of a stolen seed wrapped in banana leaves that over-
turned a monopoly:
raw rubber. the size of a suitcase. sunk in earlier january days
if not planted long ago in springy soil,
elastic, seeking self-deriving stability, as many are.
the sand, smoothed in a loop, for easier tracing of shoeprints before
bor
ders.*

Natural rubber extracted from the "tears of the tree" ("cao ochu") originally comes from the Amazon basin of South America. Despite Brazil's attempts to maintain this monopoly, the seeds of the rubber tree (*Hevea brasiliensis*) were smuggled out of the country in 1876 on unofficial orders from the English crown to be cultivated in the East Asian colonies. Only a few of these seeds survived the transport; they are the basis for all of today's rubber trees worldwide.¹

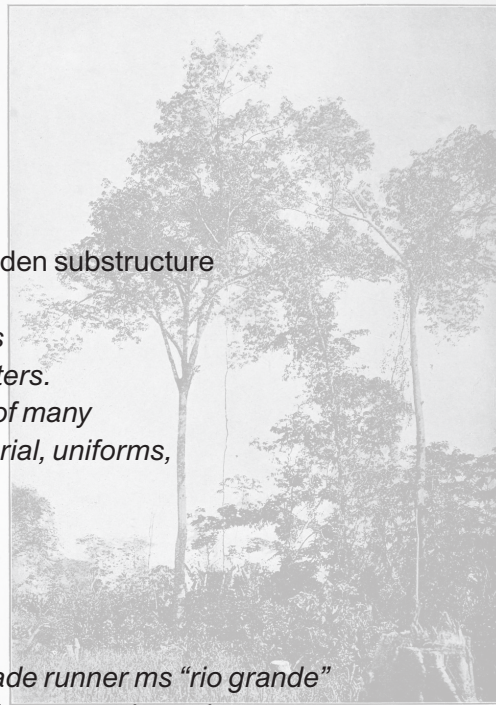


FIGURE 1. RUBBER TREES IN BLOSSOM NEAR PARÁ, BRAZIL.

For Henry Ford, the founder of Ford Motors, rubber was the only raw material missing in his industrial complex. In order to be independent of expensive imports, Ford established two rubber tree plantations one after the other in the Brazilian state of Pará in 1928, Fordlândia and Belterra, which included a workers' settlement with full infrastructure. Due to a fungus (*Microcyclus ulei*), the South American leaf-drop disease, the plantation trees didn't survive the confinement of the monoculture. In addition, there were uprisings by the workers against the rules imposed on them, which ignored the reality on the ground. With the end of the Second World War and the advent of synthetic rubber, both towns were sold back to the Brazilian government in 1945 at a great loss. The large-scale plantation and industrialization of the rubber tree, and with it, Ford's *Americanizing Dream*, failed on its continent of origin.²

Today, the rubber industry produces more than 850 types of silicone worldwide for mold making, insulating mats, films, gloves, etc. Originally found only in the Amazon basin, the rubber tree is now largely cultivated in Asia. The biggest customer, however, remains the automotive industry, which uses 70 percent of the world's natural latex for the production of rubber tires.

¹ See "Natural Rubber," in K. Matyjaszewski and M. Möller, eds. *Polymer Science: A Comprehensive Reference*, vol. 10, 281-291 (Amsterdam: Elsevier BV, 2013); and T.S. Suryanarayanan and J.L. Azevedo, "From forest to plantation: a brief history of the rubber tree," *Indian Journal of the History of Science*, vol. 58, 2023, 74-78. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43539-023-00071-7>.

² Kate Hawkey, "Humanity's Relationship with Nature: Examples from History," in *History and the Climate Crisis: Environmental History in the Classroom* (London: UCL Press, 2023), 51-76. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.4329862.10>. Accessed September 5, 2023.

Niemandsland

Alán Carrasco, 2023

Oak, cherry and chestnut wood and thermoplastic polyurethane

Niemandsland focuses on the study of three spaces that were enclosed between some of the harshest borders erected in the 20th century. These are the Korean Demilitarized Zone, the German Green Belt, and the enclaves of guerrilla influence in Colombia, respectively.

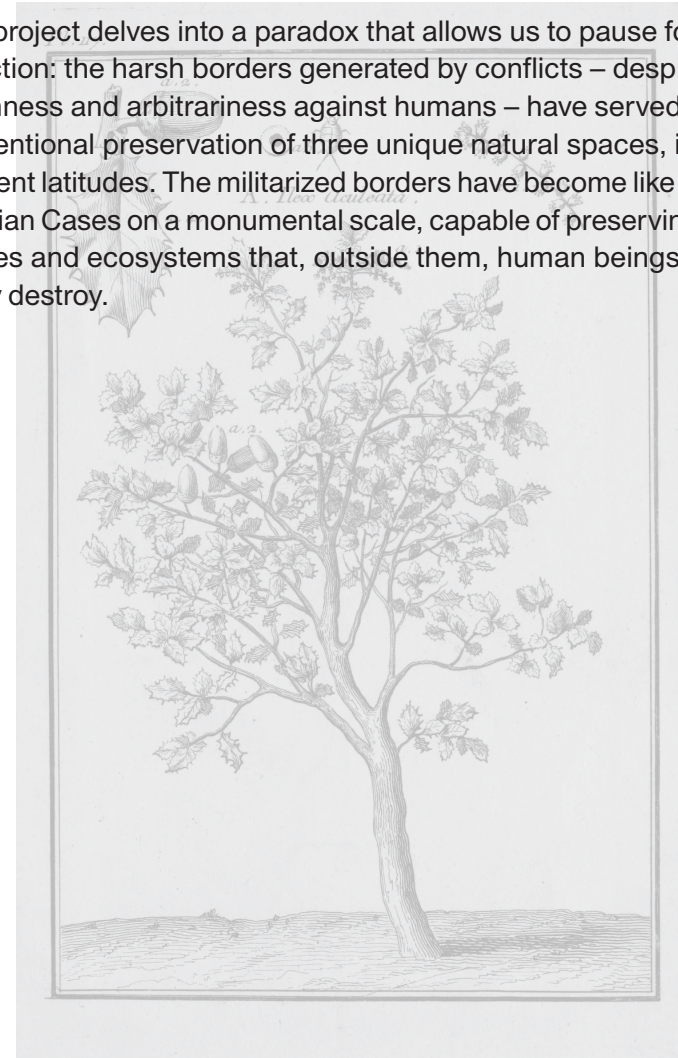
The DMZ, or the Korean Demilitarized Zone, is a security strip that protects the territorial boundary agreed in the 1953 truce between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea. It is four kilometers wide and 238 kilometers long. This year also marks the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of this hard, non-traversable border, which has allowed the proliferation of ecosystems unique to the region that have remained unaffected by human presence for seven decades.

Germany's Green Belt, on the other hand, refers to the portion of non-traversable borderland, measuring approximately 1,400 kilometers long and 200 meters wide, that separated the two German entities until 1990. In the early 1980s, biologists discovered that this border area was a refuge for a number of animal and plant species that had disappeared from most of Central Europe due to anthropogenic action.

For their part, the enclaves of guerrilla influence are the areas of Colombia to which there was very limited governmental access and which, during the years of greatest guerrilla presence, and only on the part of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, accounted for more than twenty percent of the municipal lands of the entire republic. Following the Peace Accords of 2017, several scientific expeditions have discovered up to eighty-nine new botanical and zoological species that have been named, precisely, as "Species of Peace."

The artist thus proposes the symbolic preservation of these three topographical landscapes of conflict – all established and entrenched between the 1950s and 1960s. On this occasion, the showcases will not carry living plants, but the topographies of the three contexts themselves, contained in structures of solid oak, cherry and chestnut wood, respectively; three types of wood from the same geographies they represent.

This project delves into a paradox that allows us to pause for deep reflection: the harsh borders generated by conflicts – despite their harshness and arbitrariness against humans – have served for the unintentional preservation of three unique natural spaces, in three different latitudes. The militarized borders have become like special Warden Cases on a monumental scale, capable of preserving landscapes and ecosystems that, outside them, human beings mercilessly destroy.



As if of infinite return

Agustín Ortiz Herrera, 2023
Short film in color, 15'

"... if each species is defined as a minimal modification of a species that preceded it, then all knowledge of a single species is, by constitution, interspecies."¹

In the not-too-distant future, humanity is facing the worst of many crises. Climate change has ongoingly triggered an unsustainable ecological imbalance.

In a state of desperation, the planetary scientific community conceives a plan to construct an ark of plant species to be launched into space. The purpose of this voyage is to investigate the chances of survival of plants and humans on extraterrestrial plains. Following the success of the global call for proposals, the ship is built with a small crew of humans who will devote their lives to care for the plants. The group will need to reproduce itself to continue the mission, which will take several generations to return to Earth.

Over many years, the ark's humans gain an exceptional sensitivity and ability to communicate with the plants. This dialogue changes the expectations of the mission. Unexpected phenomena occur inside the ark, resulting in the creation of hybridized beings that are neither human nor plant. Their hybridization comes from the shared need to arrive at an unspecified destination.

In this science fiction video essay inspired by the telenovela, Agustín Ortiz Herrera takes the writings of philosopher Emanuele Coccia as a conceptual reference point. *As if of an infinite return* is a speculative story about the hybridization of species and calls to question at which speculative points ontological borders are re-considered.

¹ Emanuele Coccia, *Metamorphosis* (New York: Wiley, 2021).

Plants of the Future

Mary Maggic, 2013/2020
Satellite dish, hydroponic drip system, glass vessels,
polyethylene tubes, grow lights, monstera plants

This project is motivated by the rampant deforestation of the forests in Cusuco National Park, Honduras, the loss of an idealized landscape that is one of the best-suited environments for biodiversity. Hydroponics, the science of growing and sustaining plants using only water and light, is meant to be a technological utopian solution where soil disappears from the development of a plant, therefore unchaining them from the earth that is the source of their destruction.

In the words of the artist: "I envision these 'post-natural' plants as organisms of an impossible future. From tiny dormant seeds, they know nothing but pipe, metal, and fluorescent lights. They have never experienced the sun, and yet they thrive more successfully than their predecessors. In performing the scientific relationship between creator and creation, I ask: What are the patriarchal ideals behind the construction of nature and the overwhelming narrative that technology is the ultimate solution?"

This interdisciplinary project addresses today's environmental degradation through a hydroponic installation that combines 1960s retro-futuristic aesthetics with scientific spectacle. Because back then, we all believed that by now, we would be living in a future with flying spaceships, yet in harmony with nature. Originally produced in 2013 as a BXA Capstone project at Carnegie Mellon University, *Plants of the Future* was later re-commissioned for the exhibition *Potential Worlds 2: Eco-Fictions* at the Migros Museum für Gegenwartkunst in Zurich in 2020/2021.

Farmacopea

Beatriz Santiago Muñoz, 2014
16 mm film digitized, color, silent rt, 5' 38"

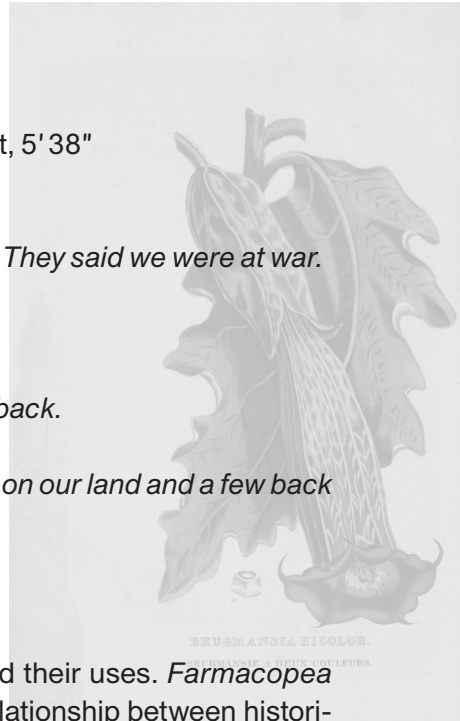
*At first we felt the effects were mild.
But then the trees started to speak to us. They said we were at war.
That we had been at war for centuries.*

*The hallucination lasted for days.
We were being attacked, and we fought back.*

*In a few days we had cut down every tree on our land and a few back
up in the hills.*

*

Farmacopeas are catalogs of plants and their uses. *Farmacopea* is a visual and text-based work on the relationship between historical processes and the natural landscape of Puerto Rico. For example, *Hippomane mancinella*, the little apple of death, is one of the most toxic plants in the world. Just sitting beneath it for an afternoon can make you sick for days. If the tree is burned, its smoke can be dangerous and cause permanent blindness. Though it was an important part of the native farmacopea, most Manchineel trees were eradicated. The landscape of the Caribbean has been thoroughly transformed: physically, through introduced species, agriculture, and development, but also through its visual representation as an undifferentiated tropical place for tourism, service and folklore.



Infrastructures of Care (the abortion herb garden)

Landon Newton, 2023
Site-specific installation, wood, soil, abortifacient plants,
seeds, jars, LED lights, library

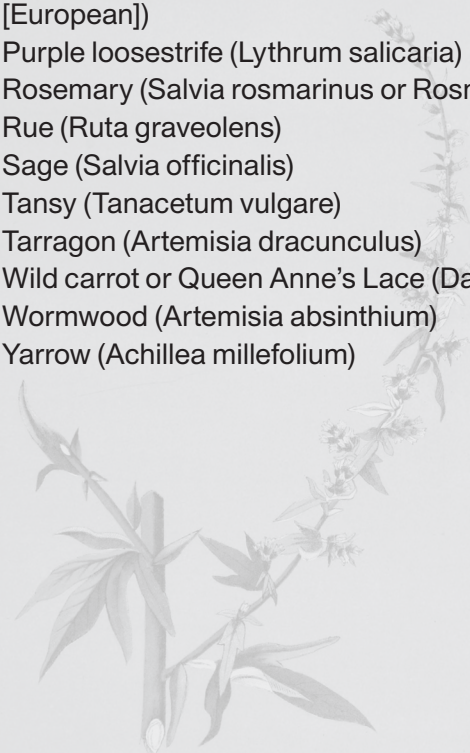
A garden is a tool, a border, a collaborative collection. A box with porous edges. A time-based medium. The site-specific installation *Infrastructures of Care (the abortion herb garden)* offers reconceptualized modes of care, resilience, and commoning practice by positing a different kind of garden shed.

This project acts as a catalyst for these dispossessed and undermined knowledge practices, primarily those relating to birth control and abortion. Each plant in this garden has abortifacient, emmenagogic, and/or contraceptive properties. The toolshed is meant to be interacted with. Included are garden maps, plant lists, jars of seeds, potting mix, growing plants, and a library. Here, a plant can be a common culinary ingredient and have abortifacient properties (*Petroselinum crispum*, parsley). It can be included in a wedding bouquet and be used as a daily birth control dose (*Daucus carota*, Queen Anne's Lace). This work is not intended to offer a medical solution, but rather, points to multitudes. For example, if we can plant, water, tend, and nourish an abortion herb garden, perhaps we can also support, value, and care for those choosing to get an abortion. This work proposes a way of thinking about alternative pathways to care and interdependence and considers access to abortion as a necessary element of bodily autonomy.

Plant List

Black cohosh (*Actaea racemosa* or *Cimicifuga racemosa*)
Chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*)
Chaste tree (*Vitex agnus-castus*)
Cotton (*Gossypium*)

Dittany (Origanum Dictamnus)
 Feverfew (Tanacetum parthenium)
 Horehound (marrubium vulgare)
 Hyssop (Hyssopus officinalis)
 Juniper (Juniperus communis, Juniperus sabina)
 Lavender (Lavandula angustifolia)
 Lemon Balm (Melissa officinalis)
 Lemon Verbena (Aloysia citrodora)
 Mint (Mentha)
 Mugwort (Artemisia vulgaris)
 Parsley (Petroselinum crispum)
 Pennyroyal (Hedeoma pulegioides [American], Mentha pulegium
 [European])
 Purple loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria)
 Rosemary (Salvia rosmarinus or Rosmarinus officinalis)
 Rue (Ruta graveolens)
 Sage (Salvia officinalis)
 Tansy (Tanacetum vulgare)
 Tarragon (Artemisia dracunculus)
 Wild carrot or Queen Anne's Lace (Daucus carota)
 Wormwood (Artemisia absinthium)
 Yarrow (Achillea millefolium)



when stones become seeds and forms prosper

Ava Binta Giallo, 2023

steel tub filled with water, soil, stone, hair, clay balls

earth to water to web

mother to daughter to landscape

womb to seed to root

dust to tears to hope

The components arranged are recipes of plant life: soil, water, and vessel. When mixed, they can become a plant. This mutuality suggests a futurity through mixture. The entanglement between these elements is speculative in its potential for transformation, components into plants. Giallo's work seeks to position this speculative mixture as something embedded in ancient, ancestral memory. This recipe of bringing together thus becomes a living archive of interspecies connectedness. Plant becomes process, conceived through the fibers of *between*, between the consistencies that conceive of plant through coming together. Interspecies enmeshment, the body's entanglement with forces that nurture, is an entanglement buried in memory – a relationality that can be studied, felt and shared. *when stones become seeds and forms prosper* proposes bringing form to the consistencies and languages of between – of ontologies of thinking beyond the reductions of Western epistemologies of differentiation.

The Architecture of a Forest

Studio Wild (Tymon Hogenelst
and Jesse van der Ploeg), 2023

Spruce trunks, spruce beams and spruce bark

What we call “Austria” can be defined by the subjective superimposition of natural, cultural, and political borders. Although the country is at the intersection of three ecosystems, it is the borders of the nation-state that are imposed upon land. This artificial, anthropocentric border prevails as the “natural” border.

Austria has grown to be one of the main exporters of spruce tree building material in Europe, and the largest in laminated spruce construction material. The spruce tree is rather unique, in that it sheds its needles to transform its own soil conditions. This makes the soil more acidic, rendering the species more tolerant to low soil fertility and allowing the spruces it to grow under a range of conditions. This *resilience* makes it transplantable and more “productive” than other coniferous or deciduous tree species. Over the past 60 years, spruce plantations were deemed to have the potential to meet “societal needs.” Thus, spruces were actively planted in places outside of the “natural” habitat of the species.¹ In Austria, 15 percent of all spruce-dominated forests are such “secondary spruce forests.”² With the increasing *productivity* of forests in Austria over the past few decades, the replacement of deciduous trees to spruces has increased from 3 to almost 9 m³/ha/year).³ Spruce trees thus emerge as a transnational monoculture formed as a result of industrialized forestry.

The Alps bridge the Eurosiberian and Mediterranean biogeographic regions in Europe and embody a unique ecotonal mountain system. Within this ecoregion lie remnants of Europe’s dwindling forests. This mountainous terrain hosts over 4,500 plant species, among which 400 are exclusive to this region.

Under what conditions did the needle-leaved tree become a heavily industrialized trans-border product? As forest becomes factory, border becomes affirmed. A metamorphosis from trees into beams, poles and surplus bark. Building with wood is often suggested as the answer to the climate crisis. But how do we question the processes of industrial production behind the material? The installation explores these questions through a serene take on a garden formed through the remnants of production and spruce monocultures, reflecting on how one defines “natural” versus man-made border in an age of fragmentation of interlocking landscapes.

The material for this installation was sourced from Slovakia. This is due to the increased pricing of spruces in Austria. All materials will be handed over to the institutes of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna for re-use after the exhibition.

- 1 Robert Jandl, “Climate-induced challenges of Norway spruce in Northern Austria,” *Trees, Forests and People*, volume 1 (June 2020): <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tfp.2020.100008>.
- 2 Thomas Gschwantner and Michael Prskawetz, “Sekundäre Nadelwälder in Österreich,” *BFW Praxisinformation* 6 (2005): 11–14.
- 3 Austrian Forest Inventory, 2019. Bundesliga Ergebnisse ÖWI 2016/18: https://bfw.ac.at/cms_stamm/500/images/OEWI/Bundesergebnisse_OEWI_16_18.pdf. Accessed March 1, 2020.

Scion

Basurama (Mónica Guiérrez), 2023
Donated and loaned plants

Scion reflects on our symbiotic relationship(s) with plants within our most intimate architectural environment: the home. In this research-based, participatory installation developed in collaboration with students and volunteers, plants are loaned temporarily to the exhibition. The maintenance of these plants in a collective manner serves to indicate the networks of care emerging from human relationships with plants. Based on a practice-oriented seminar held in the Department of Visual Cultures at the Technical University of Vienna, *Scion* considers the architecture of interspecies care, questioning what it means to live with and around plants.

In the seminar, students were invited to do research on the origins of their houseplants.¹ This helped to better understand the different ways in which plants are distributed and the techniques of local and international plant production and reproduction. As a result, students questioned the role of plants as commodities in global value chains and their multifaceted significance as typologies of interior design.

In the pot of each plant are some findings from the collective research developed during the seminar, with names, stories, and facts. *Scion* illustrates the forms of that unite human caretakers with their plants, to shed light on the global implications of everyday acts such as plant production and consumption. *Scion* seeks to encourage multi-species relationships by recognizing and visibilising their logistical mechanisms, to inspire pillars of change in the relational paradigm of conviviality.

¹ A full list of collaborators can be found on page 28.

Growing Garden

Dusts Institute with Adam Hudec, Katja Sterflinger,
Michelle Howard and Laura Rabbachin, 2023
Site-specific microorganisms from a building
façade grown on agar

Growing Garden is a living, site-specific, research-based installation. By providing a dialogue between art, architecture, geomicrobiology, and critical theory, the piece considers the intricate relationships shaped by the border(s) between anthropocentric and nonhuman environments. This evolving installation is a laboratory-like spectacle curated by microorganisms collected directly from the facade of a building of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. It highlights the border as a framework, informing our evaluation of microorganisms and purification methodologies that tend to disregard their existence. By doing so, it emphasizes the separation of humans from nature and reinforces the prevailing notions of cleanliness and maintenance that eradicate the aesthetically distressing changes originating from non-human life on urban and architectural surfaces. What if naturally occurring stains on architectural surfaces were given critical attention?

By collecting, analyzing, and cultivating microorganisms found on the facade of the Academy building, *Growing Garden* seeks to acknowledge the crucial role these microorganisms play in urban ecosystems and their often-overlooked visual qualities. To showcase this living artwork, petri dishes containing various types of agar food are strategically placed along the border between the exhibition room's interior and exterior. This specific location, in between two layers of historical window, rarely utilized by other practitioners, proves to be an ideal spot for the *Growing Garden* and the microorganisms that thrive within it.

The installation is a part of ongoing research in "Epidermitecture" at the Institute for Art and Architecture and the Institute for Natural Sciences and Technology in the Art at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Of Breath and Sound: Narrative Strategies for a Contaminating Composition

laschulas (Angélica Castelló, Natalia Domínguez Rangel, Lorena Moreno Vera and Lucía Simón Medina), 2022
Four-channel sound installation based on a group composition written and performed by laschulas.

Sound is not something self-sufficient or isolated in nature. It cannot exist by itself.¹

We are contaminated by our encounters; they change who we are as we make way for others. As contamination changes world-making projects, mutual worlds – and new directions – may emerge. Everyone carries a history of contamination.²

The need to breathe is something that equalizes all types of living beings – from all species of animals and plants to microscopic organisms and parasites. Beyond the most standard usage of the word *contamination*, in this piece, the term finds a basis of collaboration between the participants – linking to sound and breath(ing)'s communal nature; both refer to a stimulus and a motion between two or more entities for transmission, which carry physical and emotional effects.

When combined, breath and sound produce utterances that inhabit a specific moment and a particular body (the performative agent). Each utterance is unique and impossible to repeat identically. However, the effect on the receiver allows those sound and air emissions to linger. And here lies the beauty of breath(ing), as its expression is manifold, and its reproduction lies in its effect on the other, that is, its contaminating factor.

Emanuele Coccia focuses special attention on the idea of “atmosphere” as something built by an intertwined existential mixture in the world: The air we breathe is not a purely geological or mineral reality but rather the breath of other living things. It is a by-product of the “life of others.” *Of Breath and Sound* thus delves into breath(ing)'s manifold physical, abstract and aural layers, emphasizing its commonality – or *atmosphere* – as the primary act of existence that is entirely dependent on and built by the lives of others.



THE LATTICE FUNGUS AND ORANGE ELF-CUP.

The Lattice Fungus is one of the most remarkable of these strange forms of plant life. Starting much like a puff ball, it bursts through its wrapper and grows to a height of four inches, covered with olive slime. This then erode with the expansion of the plant, revealing the red colour beneath, and the completely developed plant stands like a network of coral. It gives off a most offensive odour. The Orange Elf-cup in the lower half of the picture is a beautiful way like fungus that may sometimes be found in hundreds on woodland banks. Both forms are shown of the natural size.

1 Francois J Bonnet. “Apprending Sound,” 2 Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom in Bonnet, F., B. Bradley & E. Namour (Eds.), at the End of the World* (Princeton, Princeton ANTES DEL SONIDO (Mexico City, Mexico: Universtiy Press: 2015). Buró-Buró) 16–19.

Project Collaborators *Scion*

Elizaveta Pikul, Alba Domingo Dophemont, and students enrolled in the *Laboratory of Posthumanist Architecture* in the Department of Visual Culture (TU WIEN): Marcel Schmidt, Marieta-Georgia Bariami, Philip Baumann, Franca Bierich, Manon De Kooning, Marie Falser, Anna Gramm, Eva Heese, Sophie Hiesberger, Patrick Hoffmann, Laura Huber, Alice Iti, Emma Kantorkova, Isabella Krammel, Heidi Kresbach, Sofiya Lukyanchenko, Hanna Maresch, Alena Anna Marold, Lorenz Möltgen, Tara Muecke, Merve Selin Onay, Elif Sanem Özmen, Thomas Pravits, Clémence Quenis, Helen Radermacher, Lena Rössler, Maike Rummer, Greta Semancova, Larissa Sunderbrink, Mona Swiczinsky, Anna Till, Ana Tereza Tiripa, Vera Virtanen, Eliza-Iris Voiculescu, Patrick Weinbeck and Yuxin Zheng

Furniture by Afterhour Furniture
Ceramics by Teresa Berger

Public Programme

Black Atlantis: The Plantationocene
· 8.11.2023

Keynote lecture by Dr. Ayesha Hameed
The talk will be followed by a public conversation between Ayesha Hameed and Carmen Lael Hines.

Ayesha Hameed (London, UK) explores the legacies of indentureship and slavery through the figures of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Her Afrofuturist approach combines performance, sound essays, videos, and lectures. Hameed examines the mnemonic power of these media – their capacity to transform the body into a body that remembers. The motifs of water, borders, and displacement, recurrent in her work, offer a reflection on migration stories and materialities and, more broadly, on the relations between human beings and what they imagine as nature.

Recent exhibitions include solo exhibitions at Kunstinstituut Melly, Netherlands (2022) and Bonniers Konsthall, Sweden (2022); group exhibitions at Zeitz MOCAA, South Africa (2022); Liverpool Biennale, UK (2021); MOMENTA Biennale, Canada (2021); Gothenburg Biennial, Sweden (2019, 2021); Lubumbashi Biennale, DRC (2019); and the Dakar Biennale, Senegal (2018). She recently co-directed the residency *The Weapon of Theory* as a Conference of Birds at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity (2022) and was an Art Explora Resident at Cité internationale des arts Paris (2023). She is co-editor of *Futures and Fictions* (Repeater, 2017) and co-author of *Visual Cultures as Time Travel* (Sternberg/MIT, 2021). She is currently a Senior Lecturer in Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London, and a Kone Foundation Research Fellow.

Bio-Patina Workshop
· 3.12.2023

The bio-patina collection workshop is orchestrated by *Dusts Institute*, in collaboration with Professor Michelle Howard of IKA and Professor Katja Sterflinger of INTK.

Dusts Institute (Vienna, AT) is an interdisciplinary research platform and community agency based in Vienna, Austria. *Dusts Institute* brings together artists, environmental activists, scientists and architects to raise awareness about environmental issues and promote sustainable practices. By providing a space for artists and interdisciplinary researchers to showcase their work and engage with the public on environmental topics, the aim of *Dusts Institute* is to use art as a means of communication to connect with a wider audience and inspire people to take action to address environmental issues. It includes interactive installations on public space, learning workshops, performing arts and exhibitions that are used to communicate a wide range of environmental challenges, from the human impact upon the environment and diversity of nature to the environmental degradation. *Dusts Institute* also serves as a space for learning, where artists and researchers work together to develop educational programs and initiatives that promote environmental literacy and inspire individuals to take an active role in protecting the planet.

Metaphysics of Mixture
· 19.1.2024

An audio-visual performance by *The Institute for Postnatural Studies*.

The *Institute for Postnatural Studies* (Madrid, ESP) is a center for artistic experimentation from which to explore and problematize postnature as a framework for contemporary creation. Founded in 2020, it is conceived as a platform for critical thinking, a network that

brings together artists and researchers concerned about the issues of the global ecological crisis through experimental formats of exchange and the production of open knowledge. From a multidisciplinary approach, the institute develops long-term research focused on issues such as ecology, coexistence, politics, and territories. These lines of investigation take different shapes and formats, including seminars, exhibitions, and residencies as spaces for academic and artistic experimentation. The *Institute for Postnatural Studies* works at the intersection between Spain and international practices and debates. From its headquarters in Madrid, a 300m² warehouse with a workshop, residency spaces, and shared workspaces, invites artists, researchers, and cultural agents to create dialogues with alumni and the broader public. In parallel, the Institute has created the publishing platform Cthulhu Books.

What the Wild Things Are: Experiments in an Anthropogenic Wilderness
· 15.2.2024

Public talk and workshop led by
RESOLVE COLLECTIVE.

RESOLVE (London, UK) is an interdisciplinary design collective that combines architecture, engineering, technology and art to address social challenges. They have delivered numerous projects, workshops, publications, and talks in the UK and across Europe, all of which look toward realizing just and equitable visions of change in our built environment.

Much of *RESOLVE*'s work aims to provide platforms for the production of new knowledge and ideas. An integral part of this way of working means designing with and for young people and under-represented groups in society. Here, "design" encompasses both physical and systemic inter-

vention, exploring ways of using a project's site as a resource and working with different communities as stakeholders in the short and long-term management of projects. In this way, design carries more than aesthetic value; it is also a mechanism for political and socio-economic change.

RESOLVE's project portfolio ranges from architecture/urban design projects to community support work, from artist installations to research publications. They have worked critically with numerous art institutions including S1 Artspace (Sheffield); Het Nieuwe Instituut (Rotterdam); Haus Der Kulturen Der Welt & SAVVY Contemporary (Berlin); Kunstverein Braunschweig (Braunschweig); Wellcome Collection, V&A Museum, The Barbican Centre, Tate Modern & Mosaic Rooms (London); a variety of public sector clients such as the London boroughs of Croydon, Ealing, and Greenwich; and other fellow community-focused organizations such as SADACCA (Sheffield), Skin Deep (London), MAIA (Birmingham), and Mansions of the Future (Lincoln). They also lead an undergraduate unit at the Architectural Association.

Curators

Carmen Lael Hines

Carmen Lael Hines is a writer, researcher and curator particularly interested in tech, bodies, and the implications of their entanglements. Through writing, teaching and curating, Carmen thinks about how culture is produced and manifests itself on built and digital environments. She is currently a researcher and lecturer in the Department of Visual Cultures at the Technical University of Vienna, where she teaches courses on new media theory, digital culture and post-humanism. Her most recent writings have concerned topics such as neoliberalism and aesthetics, femtech, home automation, dating apps and platform urbanism. She is currently co-editing the book *Dissident Practices: Posthumanist Approaches to a Critique of Political Economy*, to be published by Bloomsbury.

In her capacity as curator, she has worked on exhibitions such as, *Platform Austria*, Austria's contribution to the Venice Architecture Biennale 2021, *Planetary Drift* (e-flux screening room NY), *Another Europe* (The Austrian Cultural Forum New York), *Materia* (Galerie Kandlhofer), amongst others. She has lectured in teaching programs at universities including: The Royal Institute of Art Stockholm, The University of Bologna, TU Graz, and The Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, amongst others. She co-hosts a podcast with Morgane Billuart called *GirlEmployee*, which explores digital feminism(s), platform capitalism, and visual culture.

Adam Hudec

Adam Hudec is a researcher, architect, activist, co-founder and educator, focusing his expertise on material processes of nature and culture through lenses of cross-disciplinary investigation. Operating at the

intersection of art, science and architecture, cross-disciplinary methodologies became his tool to investigate unexpected and hidden anomalies in the environment.

His mission is to articulate issues related to environmental, social, political and ethical concerns while shifting the role and the boundaries of disciplines. Outcomes of his cross-disciplinary collaborations are usually communicated through Dusts Institute, a research platform and community space he co-founded, leading Adam's practice towards a collaborative effort to re-claim and re-construct a common knowledge about the environment. Adam's projects have been shown at various international exhibition venues including Bi-City Biennale in Shenzhen, Design Biennale BIO 26 in Ljubljana and Venice Biennale in 2022.

Roberto Majano

Roberto Majano is an art historian and cultural manager. Roberto studied in Spain, Brazil, China, and Italy, and has obtained different grants, such as the Internship Program of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, and the Culturex Grant at the Royal Academy of Spain in Rome. He worked on major cultural events such as the Milan Universal Exposition in 2015 and the Venice Biennale (2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021). He is currently register and communication manager at the Juana de Aizpuru gallery in Madrid.

Majano has published articles on platforms such as: *El Cultural*, *Exit Magazine*, *A*desk* and *Neo2*. In his capacity as curator, he has developed different exhibitions in Spain and Italy, among them: *Hacer ventana* (2019) at the Alcázar of Toledo, *Life after still life* (2021) for Venice Art Projects and *Cadere a Roma* (2023) at Cosmo Trastevere, Roma.

A...kademie der bildenden Künste Wien
Exhibit Galerie
Bordering Plants
10.11.2023–18.2.2024

Editor
Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

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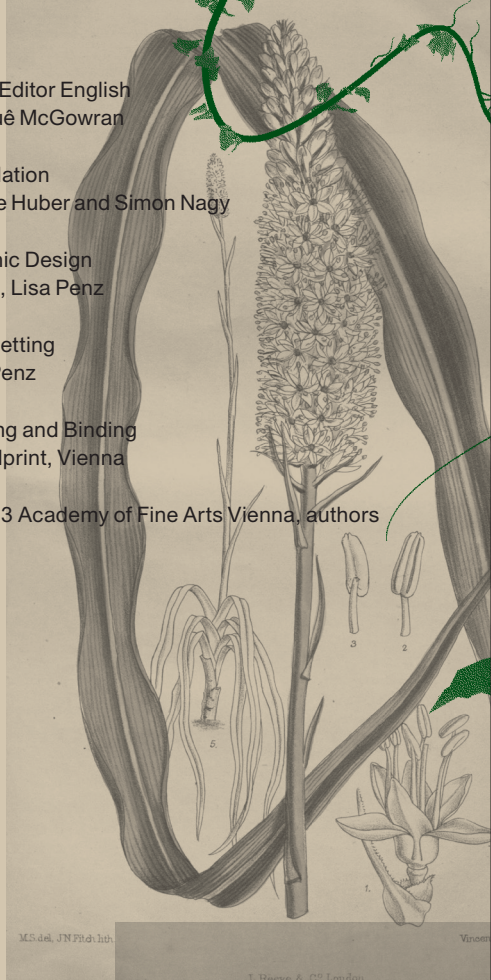
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