

**NOMEDA & GEDIMINAS
URBONAS**

**PARTIALLY
PARTIALLY
SWAMPED
INSTITUTION
LIST OF WORKS**

Across cultures and landscapes, the swamp spells crisis. It is bad nature that undoes the elementary order by mixing up soil, air, and water into a bottomless formlessness resistant to being mapped and depicted. Home only to vermin, nothing can be built or cultivated in its chaotic fecundity, which even threatens to make a mess of time itself by preserving the bodies and materials that come to rest there.

Embracing—and reversing—such negative mythologies of the natural world, *Partially Swamped Institution* sees hope and futurity in the swamp. The exhibition restages major works from the last decade by Nomedas and Gediminas Urbonas, including *River Runs* (2012), *Mushroom Power Plant* (2017), and *The Psychotropic House: Zooetics Pavilion of Ballardian Technologies* (2015–16). Archives of earlier projects are also presented, some of which date back to the time of transition following the fall of the iron curtain. From early feminist readings of the (post-)Soviet psyche to community-based activist art and assemblages

of art and science, the exhibition traces the changing phases of the Urbonases' oeuvre. A regard for what we would today call environmental citizenship, however, has been a premise of their collaboration all along.

Characteristic of how the artists play with social forms and processes, *Partially Swamped Institution* is an exhibition that leaks agency and permits contingency. Straddling human and not-so-human bodies, it includes workshops, living entities, and robots—and in an extraordinary gesture, brings the swamp to the museum, as one has been constructed in the courtyard of the National Gallery of Art.

This piece of live contra-band tangles urban and natural ecologies, and invites the institution to act as a caregiver for a community of organisms that becomes both a device for action and a meditation on new forms of coexistence.

An off-site protagonist is a bog in southern Lithuania, Meškos Šikna—in English, the Bear's Ass. The Urbonases have foraged Meškos Šikna for imaginings to introduce in their museum swamp, and it will be the destination for field trips during the exhibition period. Besides that, it also carries a fitting toponym for countries that are the butt of imperialist expansion.

The exhibition's title evokes American artist Robert Smithson's *Partially Buried Woodshed*, a classic of land art that became an impromptu memorial for the students who were shot dead at its location

by National Guard soldiers during anti-war protests in 1970.

Such intense points of confrontation suggest cultural and democratic institutions that are exposed and vulnerable, but also how ecosystems are—or ought to be considered as—political subjects. The swamp is a dynamic multiplicity of beings and materials, elements, and terrains that defies the division of the world into constructs of “nature” and “culture”, offering an unexpected chance for new sense-making and for life to emerge out of chaos.

Exhibition curator
Lars Bang Larsen

① Structure of Affect: Sensing Plants, Doodling Robots (2023)

Mixed-media installation: models of a lower peatland and raised peat bog, living plants, peat moss, rainwater, burned wood structure, gravel, HORIBA continuous particulate monitor with X-ray fluorescence, dimensions 430 x 3840 cm. Reed papermaking workshop: reed pulp, water, metal trays, wood frames, 60 digital prints on natural linen, boards, wooden structures from black alder. Dimensions 150 x 640 cm. Drawing robots: 2 brush plotters, raspberry pi, handmade reed paper, reed composite boards, wooden structure from black alder. Dimensions 200 x 260 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas
Architecture: Jonas Žukauskas, Jurga Daubaraitė
Bog plant community: Remigijus Daubaras, Laima Kristina Kazlauskienė, Vytautas Kazlauskas
Reed papermaking workshop: Natalia Grom
Programming: Jonas Kubilius
Fabrication: Antanas Gerlikas, Giedrius Pilkis
Scientific advisors: Tobias Putrih, Nerijus Zableckis
Producer: MIT Climate Visions
Special thanks: Gintaras Rapkauskas, Barbara Lavrenova, Raimonda Grumadaitė, Juozas Molis, Juozas Dautartas, Jūratė Sendžikaitė

The *Structure of Affect: Sensing Plants, Doodling Robots* was conceived for the *Partially Swamped Institution* curated by Lars Bang Larsen for the National Gallery of Art in Vilnius, Lithuania. Supported by Vytautas Magnus University, UAB Durpeta, UAB Baloša, UAB Paina ir Ko, Environmental Protection Agency

Structure of Affect is an experimental playground that assumes various forms: a swamp, an artificial organ, and a laboratory of emergent ecologies.

The work consists of a mix of materialities, objects, and agencies: lower peatland and raised peat bog models, a water filtration system, an air pollution sensor, a reed papermaking workshop, doodling robots, and networks connecting them all. The plant community models were developed in collaboration with wetland restoration scientists. After the exhibition, all plants on display will be returned to their habitats, which are undergoing restoration.

The swamp—a living organism—is nested in the center of the former museum of the revolution. Thus, the architecture that once celebrated the progress of modern man and his victory over nature is interrupted by a formless hybridity that breaks through the reinforced concrete floor in what is now a center of contemporary culture, the National Gallery of Art. Confronting a modernist legacy of filtering and purification, this animated and more-or-less invited entity introduces an active multiplicity of dirt, critters, sounds, and smells, and invites us to imagine the metabolic processes in which the institution is—and could be—involved.

In cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency of Lithuania, a solid particle sensor is installed in the swamp of *Structure of Affect*. The data it gathers is transmitted to the AI module *Swamp Intelligence* and to two doodling robots in the exhibition hall. The robots create their own graphic swampy imaginaries by translating the data collected in the swamp into vectors (perhaps making us suspect that the swamp brain has dreamt the whole exhibition).

In wetlands, invasive reeds and black alders spread quickly, threatening the ecosystem with their overgrowth. To ensure the circulation of water and preserve the wetlands, scientists must reduce these plant populations every year. Putting harvested reeds to good use, *Structure of Affect* offers a workshop at which the audience is invited to make their own reed paper. Another speculative product in the exhibition is a composite board made from reed compressed with a plant-based glue. The infrastructure of the workshop—tables and dryers for reed paper—is created from black alder.

Linen towels for drying the reed paper become displays for reference libraries and archives of other artworks. During the course of the exhibition, the dry archives circulate among the structures and spaces of the museum, and reference images printed on the towels are soaked in the swampy water, thus creating operational images.

In this way—as if in a swamp—*Structure of Affect* extends the ecology of wetlands restoration throughout the institution’s architecture, in works and displays whose elements and materialities mix and mingle in a performance of the exhibition’s affective and empathetic method.

② The Swamp Observatory: Eco-monsters of the Future Swamp (2022)

Exhibition version: Augmented Reality app, QR codes UV printed on acrylic, 31 pieces of clay, dimensions variable. Visual archive: 60 digital prints on linen, wooden structure. Dimensions 150 x 640 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas
Realization in collaboration with: Atheneskolan Gotland (drawings and sounds), Indrė Umbrasaitė (architecture), Kristupas Sabolius (script), Mouse on Mars (sound compositions), Terry T Kang and Thomas Harriett (programming)

The Swamp Observatory: Eco-Monsters was commissioned by the Public Art Agency Sweden and Baltic Art Center and curated by Helena Selder, produced by Ana Norberg and further developed for the *Children’s Forest Pavilion* curated by Jurga Daubaraitė and Jonas Zukauskas for the Lithuanian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale Architecture Exhibition 2023. Supported by Lithuanian Council for Culture and MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology. Powered by Hoverlay.

The Swamp Observatory: Eco-Monsters of the Future Swamp is a conceptual playground and an augmented reality app. Based on a collaboration with primary school youth, the project proposes a new type of multi-sensorial public space where humans and nonhumans

meet in a hybrid world of reality and fiction.

The app facilitates a vision of a “shadow biosphere”—life forms yet invisible to us—and seeks to catalyze human imagination for new commonalities that open up for relational experimentation with living and nonliving matter around us.

The Swamp Observatory was initially created as an artistic contribution to the planning of a new sustainable city in a decommissioned military area of the Swedish island Gotland in the Baltic Sea. Initiated as an instrumentarium to help restore swamps in the area, the app was developed in collaboration with students and teachers at Athene school, who contributed to creating fictional creatures—eco-monsters—that will cohabit the planned stormwater ponds in northern Visborg.

In this way the collectively created beasts *Seagrassassador*, *Cocomolko*, *Carboni*, *Tortotubus*, *Nucleo-Flocularia*, *Cementa*, *Udarnik*, *Fouadge-Locus*, and 26 other eco-monsters now populate five virtual realms of the *Observatory*: the Carbon Coral, the Methane Cloud, the Atom Ring, the Sulfur Swarm, and the Phosphorus Moss.

③ The Swamp Observatory (2020)

Mixed-media installation, discarded peat-moss, video projections (*Olfactory Crevasse*: peat-moss fiber, synthetic scent; *Time Stack*: peat moss blocks, digital image projection of cultural references; *Biotope Model*: peat-moss structure, digital projection of generative map of the species community; *Swamp Brain*: AI module, LED projection of nature-architecture hybrids, preserved ox bladder). Dimensions variable, 100 sq/m. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas
Architecture: Indrė Umbrasaitė
Fabrication: Rytis Urbanskas, Simona Kačinskaitė
Research: Nikola Bojić

Processing programming: Thomas Sanchez Lengeling
AI module: Jonas Kubilius
Smell: Jurga Katakinaite-Jakubauskienė and Reda Valentiničiūtė
Producer: MIT Climate Visions
Scientific advisors: Jūratė Sendžikaitė, Vesta Aleknavičiūtė, Onutė Grigaitė
Special thanks: Gintaras Rapkauskas, Sigita Kantautienė, Remigijus Daubaras

The *Swamp Observatory* (2020) was commissioned by ZKM for the *Critical Zones - Observatories for Earthly Politics*, curated by Peter Weibel and Bruno Latour with Martin Guinard. Supported by Arts at MIT and Philip Khoury, Associate Provost for the Arts, UAB Durpeta.

The *Swamp Observatory* installation plays with the idea of the return of the swamp.

In modern times, swamps and wetlands—differently from other ecosystems, like forests, or even deserts and oceans—were often conceived as the most incomprehensible and hostile environments to human civilization. Seen as chaotic and uncanny, the swamp lent itself to populist rhetoric employed by the likes of Benito Mussolini and Donald Trump who both railed against parliamentary politics as a “swamp” in need of “draining”.

Today we know that a swamp is the most efficient carbon sink on the planet—and hence something to be protected, not drained. More than this, in a time marked by environmental collapse, it can help us comprehensively sense and re-think human embeddedness in the life-support systems of this planet and illuminate the vital urgency of human cohabitation with other forms of life.

In this way, the return of the swamp sets the challenge for a renewed imagination capable of tracking relations between sensory, biogeological, social, economic, and cultural domains. The swamp is a perfect hybrid that allows us to see how natural and sociocultural bonds are interwoven in a given milieu,

allowing us to scale down planetary issues and perceive them within our closest reach.

Four figures of the installation—*Biotope Model*, *Time Stack*, *Olfactory Crevasse*, and *Swamp Brain*—form an artistic-scientific model that presents the swamp as a possible interface to what thinkers such as James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis hypothesise as Gaia: a view of the Earth as a self-regulating system, an interconnected network of relations where all living beings partake in collective regulation of various aspects of their environment.

The figures in the installation are made of peat—decomposed and carbonized vegetation and organic matter found in peat bogs. As an altered sensorial organism, the installation acts beyond exclusive human control.

Olfactory Crevasse is a lung-shaped entity suspended from the ceiling. Forming several cavities that visitors can explore with their sense of smell, it provides an opportunity to discover mischievous scents that simultaneously allure and repel, which were created with smell researchers.

The *Time Stack* consists of seven layers of memory that mark seven millennia of Lithuanian peatlands. Peat bogs are the archives of Earth: in their anaerobic medium they perfectly preserve spores, pollen, insects, plants, and even human bodies. Just as peat is a keeper of environmental information, so does the *Time Stack* open up layers of shared planetary memory.

Biotope Model is a topography built from data gleaned from the scientific analysis of Aukštumala, a swamp in western Lithuania (former East Prussia), and the site of the first scientific study of raised bogs in the

early twentieth century. Built as a reinforced peat-moss structure, the model serves as a stage for an animated map of the multifarious ecological unit that is the swamp, and all the species to which it is a host.

The *Swamp Brain* is an experiment where the artists, together with AI scientist Jonas Kubilius, have created an operational hybrid of artificial intelligence and a swamp that works beyond the human imagination. Combining natural and architectural forms, the *Swamp Brain* envisions how architecture based on the logic of natural processes could look. The resulting images are projected on an inflated and dried ox bladder.

Swamp Observatory acts as a fossil that bears witness to the idea of deep time. The installation is an outgrowth of the *Swamp School*, a future learning environment that embraces the swamp as a form of primordial technology and supports collaborative experiments in design, pedagogy, and artistic intelligence for adapting to imminent unknowns.

④ Swamp Game: Eat Me (2020)

Digital projection of the online game 16:10, game controller.

Courtesy of the artists.

Online experience: critical-zones.zkm.de/#!/detail:the-swamp-game

Concept: Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas in collaboration with Nikola Bojić, Kristupas Sabolius, and Indrė Umbrasaitė (MIT Climate Visions)
Development & User Experience: ungroup.group and Siamend Darwesh
Web design: Serge Rompza (NODE Berlin Oslo)
Sound: Jan St. Werner (Mouse on Mars)
Research in collaboration with scientists Vesta Aleknavičiūtė (Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas), Jūratė Sendžikaitė (Nature Research Centre, Institute of Botany, Lithuania)

Swamp Game was commissioned by ZKM for *Critical Zones - Observatories for Earthly Politics* curated by Peter Weibel and Bruno Latour with Martin Guinard.

Supported by Lithuanian Council for Culture.

This exploratory game invites visitors to experience the changes in perspective unfolding in a trembling swamp.

Swamp Game is inspired by the German botanist Carl Albert Weber, who in 1902 published the first-ever treatise on swamps based on his scientific study of the Aukštumala raised bog when it belonged to the former province of East Prussia. Based on his drawings and the data collected by a group of contemporary biologists who recently studied the Aukštumala bog, the game proposes the swamp as a sentient entity, and what biologists term the sympoietic relations that unfold in it—that is, the collective creation or organization of the fragile interdependencies of an ecosystem.

The game operates on several levels: It traces interactions between organisms and their habitats and distorts human coordinates in space and time, introducing an alternative universe where both forms and dimensions, as well as distances, intervals, and rhythms question perception and orientation. Here every member of the community is part of every other member's environment—and as such, necessary for the survival of the environment as a whole.

Swamp Game allows us to embody different species by floating into swamplian creatures: plants, insects, birds, amphibians, fungi, bacteria or algae and discover the main rule of cannibal metaphysics: to become the other, you have to be eaten.

The swamp world is uncertain, and navigation here is by gut feeling. Players should abandon the human desire for individuality, productivity, and competition to allow other ways of knowing and sensing the

world. The ambient soundtrack attunes players to a metamorphic world of chimeric shapes and saturated colors, where body, scale, and pace of movement shift as the perspective changes.

⑤ Swamp Intelligence (2018–2020)

AI installation, SNGAN projection, diorama inside the wall, foam structure.
Dimensions 205 x 40 x 242 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomedā & Gediminas Urbonas
SNGAN projection: Jonas Kubilius
Swamp environment fabrication: Simona Kačinskaitė, Rytis Urbanskas

Swamp Intelligence was commissioned for *The Swamp School* and further developed for Taipei Biennial 2020: *You and I Don't Live on the Same Planet—New Diplomatic Encounters* curated by Bruno Latour and Martin Guinard with Eva Lin.

In *Swamp Intelligence*, the muddy and the machinic meet in a merger between digital life forms and natural ecosystems.

Nested inside of the museum wall the installation explores alternative visioning for the Earth's new climate, based on an artificial intelligence (AI) algorithm that uses white noise to create speculative architectural forms that emerge equally—and uncannily—from both contemporary digital dreams and modernist nightmares about the swamp. If humanity insufficiently imagines how to inhabit Earth after the effects of global warming have taken hold, maybe a nonhuman intelligence can help us face the music?

The system is based on a NoPlace Neural Network (NNN), a variant of a conditional AI that is used to unveil neural network abilities to generate visual imagery that engages more-than-human worlds. The NNN has two components that work in opposition:

a generator that is continuously learning how to generate an image from a noise pattern and a discriminator that tries to guess which image is real and which is generated. In its balancing act between real and imagined, the NNN mimics the dynamic, shapeshifting forces of a biological swamp.

Unlike a modern paradigm of architecture that was understood to be autonomous and exist independently from its environment, the NNN works instead to introduce its proposals in an exchange and joint production with the various interdependencies that make it belong to a given milieu. In this setup, the machine paradoxically becomes less restricted to imagine than the artist or scientist who sets it up, producing unsettling yet environmentally sensitive imagery for the observer to interpret and perhaps apply to our new collective life conditions.

⑥ TRANSmutation (2018–2020)

Mixed-media installation: 4-channel video (9:45), lightboxes, rotating space planters. Dimensions variable, 190 x 250 cm. Courtesy of the artists, with the loans from the Lithuanian Museum of Ethnocosmology and the Nature Research Centre, Lithuania.

Concept: Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas
Film script and editing in collaboration with Gabrielė Urbonaitė
Camera: Rudolfas Levulis and Paulius Mazuras (pvz.lt)
Archival footage: Division of Image and Sound Documents at the Lithuanian Central State Archive

Film excerpts used:
Dead Season, dir. S. Kulish (Lenfilm, 1968)
The Flight of Mr. McKinley, dir. M. Schweitzer (Mosfilm, 1975)
Mirage, dir. A. Brench (Riga Film Studio, 1986)
The Chase, dir. B. Gostiov (Mosfilm, 1987)

Space planters:
A container for plant growth in a simulated condition of zero gravity on Earth, 1974
A model of a container for plant growth in a simulated condition of zero gravity, 1974

Biogravistat, a centrifuge for plant growth in microgravity, 1979
Biogravistat-1M, a centrifuge for plant growth on a space station, 1979
Fiton-2, a micro greenhouse for plant growth in the cosmos, 1978
Fiton-3, a micro greenhouse for plant growth in the cosmos, 1982
Neris-5, an automatic centrifuge for plant growth in microgravity, 1992
Neris-8, an automatic centrifuge for plant growth in microgravity, 1997

Photo documents:
Centrifuge-clinostat holder with bean shoots.
Effects of artificial microgravity, 1972
Container for growing plants under variable gravity conditions, 1972–1974
Container for the study of plant growth and spatial orientation processes in space flight conditions. Soyuz 15 space flight, Salyut 3 space station, 1974
Container for growing plants under variable gravity conditions. Salyut 4 space station, 1974–1975
Sections of *Arabidopsis thaliana* Heinh. Material of the Fiton-3 experiment. Salyut 7 space station, 1982

Commissioned by the Busan Biennale 2018: *Divided We Stand*, curated by Cristina Ricupero and Jörg Heiser, and further developed for the *We Never Sleep* exhibition, curated by Cristina Ricupero and Alexandra Midal, at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt in 2020

TRANSmutation is conceived as an apparatus that inquires into the creative possibilities of being a double agent.

Informed by sources as different as Cold War spy films, photo documents from classified space botany experiments, instruments designed for bio-experimentation in space missions, and fiction writing on human-plant hybridization, the project constructs a multifaceted and associative observatory.

The work is a reflection on the potential cross-fertilization of forms of knowledge that are normally deemed incompatible, but that the artist—as a cultural double agent—has a free pass to combine. From this counterintuitive perspective on knowledge production, **TRANSmutation** is also a consideration of the role of design and its role in shaping scientific inquiry as well as life forms.

⑦ Futurity Island (2018–2019)

Exhibition version: sonification of the soil pollution data, 6 channel sound composition, LP player, speakers, visual archive: digital print on linen, wooden structure. Dimensions 150 x 640 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Futurity Island on site: PVC pipe, 6 channel sound, dimensions 680 x 830 x 420 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas
Architecture: Indrė Umbrasaitė
Sound: Nicole L’Huillier
Collaborating artist: Tobias Putrih

Futurity Island was commissioned by the Blackwood Gallery for the exhibition *Work of Wind: Air, Land, Sea*, curated by Christine Shaw. Supported by UTM, Musket Transport, IPEX and National Endowment for the Arts.

***Futurity Island* is an immersive installation that turns environmental data into sonic cries, which address the structures—historical, metaphoric, and narrative—governing our climate futures.**

By retooling drainpipes for interspecies communication, *Futurity Island* provides a learning environment and a space for acoustic experimentation. As an instrument used to drain swamps, the pipe represents human-centered ecology and environmental domination. It may be seen as the prime symbol of the Anthropocene.

A network of pipes is assembled into an artificial skeleton to channel the sounds of “nature”. This reconfiguration aims at rendering *Amphibian Songs* through the sonification of environmental research data—the physics of the soil, land, and wind.

The work filters soil toxicity data through samples of the sounds of *Hydropsyche*, a caddisfly genus that is an amphibious architect and natural sensor of clean water. The appropriation of the pipes brings humans and nonhumans into a more symmetrical, and potentially collaborative relationship, aimed at attuning to the silenced voices of our planet.

⑧ Swamp School Archive (2018–2020)

Exhibition version: overhead projector and selection of images laser printed on transparent film 30 x 42 cm; digital print on natural linen, wooden structure, dimensions 150 x 800 cm. Courtesy of the artists.
More about the Swamp School: swamp.lt

Curated by Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas
Produced by Architektūros fondas
The Swamp School was commissioned by the Lithuanian Council for Culture.

The project was commissioned for the Lithuanian participation at the 16th International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale; and organized and produced in partnership with the MIT School of Architecture and Planning, Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, University of Antwerp, Università Iuav di Venezia, Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti (NABA) in Milan, Art Institute at the Academy of Art and Design FHNW Basel, Institute of Aesthetic Practice and Theory at the Academy of Art and Design FHNW Basel, University of Iceland, Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, a.pass (advanced performance and scenography studies) in Brussels, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Contour Biennale 9 in Mechelen, Design for the Living World class at HFBK University of Fine Arts Hamburg, and Städelschule Architecture Class at Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Frankfurt.

Supported by the MIT School of Architecture and Planning, MIT Program in Art, Culture, and Technology (ACT), MIT Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST), Nordic Culture Fund, Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA), Urbonas Studio, and UAB Darpeta.

The Swamp School was a pedagogical structure at the Swamp Pavilion—a commission for the Lithuanian participation at the 16th International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale in 2018. The project aimed to locate the swamp at the center of contemporary environmental concerns and to set the scene for the exploration of swamp imaginaries. The Swamp School was organized in three chapters: *Swamp Radio* (on listening), *Futurity Island* (on sympoietics), and *Commonism* (on cohabitation and speculative forms of citizenship).

Focusing on workshops that supported experiments in design, pedagogy, and artistic intelligence, it brought together over 200 designers, scholars, and researchers

from diverse disciplines, including architecture, art, philosophy, anthropology, and sociology, from more than 12 international schools across the globe.

Learning from the swamp means learning from an organism and a geological reality in which borders defined by social, political, and cultural factors are porous and permeable. In exploring new pedagogies and educational methodologies—such as sensorial, embodied and immersive forms of collaborative learning—the *Swamp School* made for an open artistic and architectural form to support emerging knowledges and changes of perspective, on the backdrop of the comprehensive environmental crises that force humanity to adapt to imminent unknowns.

Echoing the spatially dislocated sensations of pirate radio, the *Swamp School* engaged participants' sensorium to impress a pedagogical experience of fermentation, deep time, olfaction, fecundity, filtration, and, among other concepts, the future.

⑨ Mushroom Power Plant (2017–2021)

Installation: Lightbox, carbonized wooden case, UV print, silkscreen, copper, aluminum, silicon slurry, carbonized mushroom, acrylic, felt. Dimensions 220 x 380 x 80 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas
Studio production: Simona Kačinskaitė, Rytis Urbanskas, Indrė Umbrasaitė, Lucy Siyao Liu, Aistė Ambrazevičiūtė
Scientific collaborators: Viktorija Makarovaitė and Sofia Perez-Villar at the University of Kent in Canterbury, UK and Kristina Kantminienė and Egidijus Griškonis at KTU in Kaunas, Lithuania

Mushroom Power Plant was commissioned by the Creative Foundation for the Folkestone Triennial 2017, curated by Lewis Biggs, and further developed for the exhibitions *The God-Trick* curated by Marco Scotini at Parco Arte Vivente in 2018 and the *Mud Muses – A Rant about Technology* curated by Lars Bang Larsen at Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Sweden, in 2019.

Supported by Lithuanian Council for Culture.

Encapsulating Nomeda and Gediminas Urbonas' ongoing research in the field of energy humanities, *Mushroom Power Plant* hypothesizes mushrooms and bacteria as an alternative power source.

The alternative power plant is based on *Geobacter* bacteria that gain their energy by using iron oxide, a rust-like mineral that is abundant in soils and sediments. *Geobacter* depend on iron oxide like humans depend on oxygen. This energy source is connected to carbonized mushroom slurry, which replaces the graphite that is typical in conventional battery production.

Focusing on the largely unnoticed, yet crucial, contribution of mycelial networks in ecosystems, the work is a reflection on symbiotic relationships both in nature and between artists and scientists. *Mushroom Power Plant* is here presented in the form of a three-dimensional poster that talks about the materiality of microbial energy.

⑩ The Psychotropic House: Zooetics Pavilion of Ballardian Technologies (2015–2017)

Installation: mycomorphs (dried mycelium-based composites), metal tube structure, wooden shelves covered with lime, vinyl, workshop series. Dimensions of one module 300 x 300 x 220 cm. Visual archive: digital print on linen, wooden structure. Dimensions 150 x 1000 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas, in dialogue with Tracey Warr and Viktorija Šiaulytė
Architecture design in collaboration with Paulius Vaitiekūnas and Jautra Bernotaitė
Zooetics poster design: NODE Berlin Oslo
Sound recording and mastering: Antanas Dombrovskis
Project partners: Baltic Champs, Brasmicel
Special thanks to Marijus Bakas, Dionizas Bajarūnas, Kęstutis Jusčius, Dalius Keršys, Sayjel Patel, Paulius Pilipavičius, Andrius Pukis, Edison de Souza, Gediminas Stoškus

Commissioned by the XII Baltic Triennial 2015, curated by Virginija Januškevičiūtė; and further developed for the 32nd São Paulo Biennale 2016, curated by Gabi Ngcobo, Júlia Rebouças, Sofia Olascoaga, Jochen Voltz, and Lars Bang Larsen; and for the international contemporary art festival *Survival Kit 9*, curated by Jonatan Habib Engqvist, Solvita Krese, and Inga Lāce in Riga, Latvia, 2017

A mycological playground and display venue for prototypes and models built by the audience, the *Zooetics Pavilion* provides an immersive environment in which visitors are invited to co-produce future ecologies and knowledge: a future emerging through objects that are grown by interacting microorganisms as much as they are built by the human hands. Using mycelium, the part of the fungus responsible for the absorption of nutrients, oxygen, and energy, participants can create their own biotechnological artifacts—mycomorphs. The work is an open laboratory for the exploration of environmental matter and networked ecosystems.

In *Zooetics Pavilion*, the mycelium grows in regional agricultural waste from the production of hemp, flax, the sawdust of deciduous trees, coffee skin, sugar-cane bagasse, corn pollard, or eucalyptus sawdust.

The mutually inextricable relations between the human and the nonhuman that are investigated in the *Zooetics Pavilion* may be yet unmapped by existing knowledge. Therefore, their existence calls for new forms of aesthetic and scientific imagination—an ecological intelligence. Under the name *Zooetics*, Nomeda and Gediminas Urbonas have in recent years co-organised a series of interdisciplinary conferences at which scientific and poetic knowledge spheres were explored between hard science—such as biology and geology—and the arts. *Zooetics* is understood as a form of research undertaken in collaboration with other forms of life—including mammals, microbes, and mollusks—

from which interspecies designs and interfaces can be envisioned.

The work is inspired by the collection of short stories, *Vermilion Sands* (1971), by English sci-fi novelist J. G. Ballard: here a world is imagined where technological devices are alive and sentient, such as singing sculptures and architecture capable of responding to the emotional states of its inhabitants.

①① Future Fictions (2013)

Exhibition version: overhead projector and selection of images laser printed on transparent film 30 x 42 cm, algae, water tanks, military grade sensors, archival materials. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas
In collaboration with Tracey Warr, Viktorija Šiaulytė, Kristupas Sabolius, Nikola Bojić, and Lucas Freeman
Producer: Jutempus and MIT Climate Visions
Future Fictions partners include the University of Iceland, Reykjavik University, KADECO Ásbrú Enterprise Park, and Nordic Culture Point, and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Future Fictions (2016) was supported by the European Commission; Lithuania's Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology (MITA); the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania; and the Lithuanian Council for Culture.

As they say in the movies, *Future Fictions* is based on a true story.

In October 2016, an international group of experts gathered at Ásbrú in Iceland, the site of a recently decommissioned U.S. naval air base. Here they joined local intelligence experts in a think tank aiming to authenticate and decipher newly discovered documents from an extraordinary clandestine research project about synthetic ecologies carried out at the base during the height of the Cold War. The team of experts included anthropologists, mycologists, marine biologists, systems designers, information architects,

bio-logicians, acoustic engineers, and philosophers.

In 2006, an anonymous Icelandic intelligence officer revealed the presence of a secret communications bunker that was the center of a vast network of cable sensors running out into the North Atlantic. These sensors coupled the bunker to a number of tidal tanks, which appear to have hosted experiments in human-algae symbiosis and bio-cybernetic feedback systems.

There are considerable gaps in the archival material that documents the secret research facility, due to a combination of file redaction and natural corrosion of the abandoned technology. Moreover, even the best intact reports are hard to understand: one of the most intriguing of these, dated to 1971, contained four confounding diagrams, or “visions”, of interscalar and trans-systemic relationships that appeared to support the experiments in interspecies exchange.

Selected archival matter was revealed to the public as part of the Future Fictions Summit held at Reykjavik’s Hafnarhús in October 2016—the first in a series of exposés and public discussions on the Ásbrú experiment.

①② Mission to Mars (2013)

Exhibition version: overhead projector and selection of images laser printed on transparent film 30 x 42 cm, jarosite, MIT yeast formula, archival materials. Courtesy of the artists and MIT.

Concept: Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas
Research and prototyping: Ann Lui, Fabio Ciaravella, and MIT course 4.307/8
Producer: MIT Climate Visions

Mission to Mars (2013) research was commissioned by Kirsha Kaechele for *The River Derwent Heavy Metal Project* at MONA (Museum of Old Art and New) and supported by MONA in Tasmania, Australia.

An ongoing interest in river cultures brought Nomedas and Gediminas Urbonas to Tasmania for *Mission to Mars*. The project was developed in collaboration with students from MIT.

The group focused its activities on the mouth of the River Derwent, an area contaminated by heavy metals. Proposing a series of workshops—“disaster training stations”—the project was hosted by the MONA (Museum of Old and New Art) in Hobart, Tasmania. The workshops forged a link between a fictional, twenty-first century MIT Mars Lab and contemporary cleanup efforts along the Derwent following decades of jarosite dumping by Nyrstar, an international mining and metal-processing company.

Jarosite—a basic sulfate of potassium and iron that is also present on Mars—is a main byproduct of the zinc smelting industry situated on the banks of the Derwent. Each of the disaster training stations investigated a different form of jarosite processing that was relevant both to the conditions at the site and to future missions to Mars.

Mission to Mars displaced MIT’s own history of military-industrial research to this remote site to grapple with not-so-remote ecological problems.

①③ River Runs (2012)

Exhibition version: *Jellyfish Lily and a Port. A prototype of an Unpowered Pleasure boat registered in the UK for the use in rivers. Recycled plastic buckets, boxes, pipes, neoprene. video projection 16:10 (3:30 min); 9-channel video installation, various durations on monitors. Courtesy of the artists.*

Concept: Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas in collaboration with writer/curator Tracey Warr and architect/designer Giacomo Bruno Castagnola Chaparro
Camera: Urbonas Studio
Editing: Nomedas Urbonas, Gabrielé Urbonaité

Special thanks: Mike Blow, Adrian Pawley, Laura Degenhardt, Ieva Kausteklytė, Julie Turley, Tazeem Majid, Rachel Cheer ir Haavard Helle

Commissioned by Oxford Brookes University in the UK for the Wet Symposium, curated by Tracey Warr, and produced by Emily Korchmáros at Modern Art Oxford in 2012.

Supported by Arts Council England, Oxford Brookes University, MIT, the Canal & River Trust, the Association of Art Historians and the Environment Agency.

River Runs is a research and design project that investigates riparian territory to develop a new vision of the river as public space.

Developed in Oxford in 2012 in collaboration with researchers and riverside dwellers as a site-specific laboratory, the project explores how the river as a public good defines our sense of belonging on individual and collective scales. In this way, the work examines where and how a public sphere can be constituted today and the role of art in its creation.

Extensive research of riparian cultures in Oxford culminated with the launch of Jellyfish Lily, a prototype for a kind of constructed organism, but also a wearable technology, a networked vessel, and a playground that addresses a wide set of sensorial and perceptual concerns, including the feel of weight, motion, temperature, and phenomenological otherness. It is a social device, then, for feeling the environment and imagining a new commons on the river.

Jellyfish Lily had a deep presence in the life cycle of the river zone and its connecting life-support systems. Focusing on the mundane and the affordable through bricolage and making-do, the artists scavenged local materials to create Lily, including plastic tanks, barrels, boxes, and containers used by various individuals and communities around Oxford.

In response to the collapse of ecosystems on ever-larger scales, led by the increasing privatization of land and extraction of resources, *River Runs* proposes a model for artistic research and intervention that explores how to inhabit a world of rising sea levels.

①④ **Uto-Pia (2011–2012)**

Mixed-media installation: model (MDF), digital video, sound, posters, light box, video projection. Dimensions 200 x 600 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas
Camera: Nomedas Urbonas, Giedrius Ilgūnas
Bunker model adaptation design: Giacomo Castagnola
Contributors: Katja Bonevier, Audrius Jakubauskas, Kaj Kivinen, Maarit Munkki

Commissioned by CAA Contemporary Art Archipelago, curated by Taru Elfving and produced by Lotta Petronella for the Turku European Capital of Culture, 2011, and further developed for *Connected by Art*, curated by Kornelia Röder and Antonia Napp at the Staatliches Museum Schwerin in Germany, 2012.

***Uto-Pia* is a research project that employs experimental artistic media to survey damaged environments and dysfunctional infrastructures. As a mapping device in the specific locale of the Turku archipelago in the Baltic Sea, it proposes sheep's milk cheese—a medium connecting human, animal and planetary body.**

The title *Uto-Pia* connects the island of Uto and Pia, a woman whose family quits jobs in the city to start a new life in the countryside and raise sheep. In the work, the sheep's cheese becomes a medium that connects the body of sheep to the well-being of a human body and the geographical body of the landscape where the sheep graze. This network of coexisting, mutually dependent entities addresses the historical environmental damage produced by the militarisation of the Turku archipelago from the 18th century to the Cold War era, which turned the

islands into bunkers, and by contemporary industrial agriculture that polluted the soil and water. Through a series of cheese-making workshops that Nomeda and Gediminas Urbonas undertook on the site, the artists argued that appropriating the formerly secret Red Line bunker into a cheese-ripening facility could be a way of helping to recuperate the local quality of landscape and life. The workshops included the Finnish military by enlisting conscripts for hand-milking sheep.

Uto-Pia examines the ways in which art, food production, and technology can be leveraged to develop an ecology of sustainable everyday life through creative responses and potential future practices in societies that are forced to cope with the deepening ecological crisis.

①⑤ Guggenheim Visibility Study (2008–2011)

Exhibition version: overhead projector and selection of images laser printed on transparent film 30 x 42 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas

Graphic Design: NODE Berlin Oslo

Participants: Elena Archipovaitė, Gerda Paliušytė, Inesa Pavlovskaitė, Rūta Balsevičiūtė, Šalnė Bučiūtė, Justė Christauskaitė, Eglė Česonytė, Milda Grabauskaitė, Saulius Kriščiukaitis, Monika Lipšic, Akvilė Misevičiūtė, Eglė Obcarskaitė, Jurgis Paškevičius, Agnieszka Pokrywka, Rūta Radušytė, Dalia Sireikytė, Antanas Stančius, Linas Tranas, Ignas Uogintas, Monika Vėbraitė

SLOW TV: Ørjan Aas, Cathrine Dahl, Jason Havneraas, David Lamignan Larsen, Kristin Tårnes, Rina C. Lindgren, Fredrik Forgaard

Modeling and Fabrication: Ieva Čičėnaitė, Julija Kšivickaitė, Charles Mathis, Odd Joar Oksås, Matas Šiupšinskas

Special thanks to: Ana Miljacki, Lee Moreau

The *Guggenheim Visibility Study* was commissioned by the student organization (SMD) of the Vilnius Academy of Arts, curated by Viktorija Šiaulytė, and further developed for *Manufacturing Today*, curated by Cristina Ricupero at Kunsthall Trondheim.

The *Guggenheim Visibility Study (GVS)* was a temporary laboratory that responded to the planning of the proposed Vilnius Guggenheim Hermitage Museum (GHM) in 2008. Through a series of public interventions, the GVS proposed a parafictional modeling that satirised the spectacular visions of global starchitects.

Responding to the GHM project that used legacy of the Fluxus art movement as a local flavor to make the Guggenheim in Vilnius “site specific”, the GVS suggested alternatives to a host of unacknowledged issues in the architectural designs proposed by Zaha Hadid, Daniel Libeskind, and Massimiliano Fuksas. Thus the Urbonases’ *Legacy of Fluxus* project examined the possibility of revitalizing Fluxus by exploring the collection acquired by the Vilnius municipality with a view to define the identity and local specificity of the Vilnius GHM.

Pointing to Fluxus philosophy as a countercultural marker, the GVS proposed social housing and a space for public input to be included in the museum planning.

The *Social Housing* project suggested downscaling the grandiose plans for a Vilnius Guggenheim to a “human” level by transforming the spectacular architectures proposed for the museum into a series of shelters for homeless people. The project urged that the plans for the Guggenheim architecture be downscaled and adapted to local needs and conditions, use be made of local materials, and the capacities of the local economy be respected.

The GVS continued in Trondheim, Norway, weaving together cooking and architecture as ethical trajectories. By applying and adapting the wayward

logics of collage, appropriation, and cannibalism, the Norwegian offshoot of the GVS proposed Scandinavian waffles as a vernacular construction material for the new Guggenheim museum. Food can be explored as a stand-in for the production of desire, and in the context of global branding operations such as the Guggenheim franchise, hunger might shed light on shifts in how “urgency” is defined—from the basic needs of existence at one extreme to insatiable greed at the other.

①⑥ Villa Lituania (2007)

Exhibition version: overhead projector and selection of images laser printed on transparent film 30 x 42 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas
Commissioner and curator: Simon Rees
Producer: Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius
Assistant curator: Julija Fomina
Studio assistant: Julija Kšivickaitė
Camera: Giedrius Ilgūnas
Graphic Design: NODE Berlin Oslo
Fashion: Sandra Straukaitė
Web programming and hosting: Saulius Švirmickas, Atelier Nord
Models: Akvilė Rimantaitė & PAK
Contributors: Algirdas Baniulis, Andrea Nyiro and Cav. Eros Carboni, Duke Gorelov Vladimir Albertovitch, Saulius Kubilius, Kazys Lozoraitis, Gediminas Meiliūnas, Vytautas Sabaliauskas
Special thanks: Giedrė Jankevičiūtė, Donatas Jankauskas, Mario Cutuli, Massimiliano Fuksas, Sonda Litvaitytė, Rūta Pilekaitė, Gediminas Štoškus, Dalius Žižys and Lithuanian Central State Archives

Villa Lituania was commissioned by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania in 2007 for the Lithuanian Pavilion at the 52nd Biennale di Venezia. The project was awarded the jury’s special mention for “an insightful and subtly humorous investigation into the notion of the pavilion and the meaning of national identity, engaging the spectator with a compelling narrative.”

Villa Lituania is in the permanent collection of MO museum, Lithuania.

Villa Lituania was a study that enquired into unresolved debates around the Soviet-era occupation of Lithuania through a series of public manifestations

featuring pigeon races, architectural history, and a video archive tracing acts of disobedience.

The project was prompted by the fact that Lithuania, along with other formerly colonized countries, does not have a presence in the map of turn-of-the-century geopolitics that is the Giardini, the traditional site of the Venice Biennale, where mainly Western countries have had pavilions for national art exhibitions since the biennale started in 1895. *Villa Lituania* was a proposal for a pavilion in flight.

As a way to poetically reclaim colonized space, the project connected the absence of national representation in the Giardini with *Villa Lituania*, a building in Rome that was formerly the Lithuanian embassy. As a result of the 1939 Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, *Villa Lituania* was given to the Soviets in 1940 and it remains Lithuania’s last occupied territory.

A piece of artistic diplomacy, the Urbonases’s project connected pigeon fanciers in Lithuania, Russia, Poland, and Italy in an international pigeon race that awarded a *Villa Lituania* trophy as the prize. After 1,200 pigeons were dispatched from Venice to different countries and regions, the model of the villa was installed as a pigeon loft and adorned with posters, trophy models, and other paraphernalia of the race.

①⑦ Pro-test lab archive (2005–ongoing)

Exhibition version: overhead projector and selection of images laser printed on transparent film 30 x 42 cm. Courtesy of the artists.
More on *Pro-test lab* and the case of cinema Lietuva: vilma.cc/lietuva-timeline

Concept: Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas
Camera: Giedrius Ilgūnas, Paulius Turskis
Studio: Julija Kšivickaitė, Renata Petrauskaitė
Models by architecture students: Akvilė Rimantaitė, Sandra Šlepikaitė,

Sandra Butautaitė, Margarita Kaučikaitė
Fashion: Sandra Straukaitė

Pro-test lab archive was commissioned by NIFCA - Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art for the exhibition *Populism*, curated by Lars Bang Larsen, Cristina Ricupero, and Nicolaus Schaffhausen and further developed for the 6th Gwangju Biennale – *Fever Variations*, curated by Cristina Ricupero in 2006.

Pro-test lab archive is in the permanent collection of Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci in Prato, Italy.

***Pro-test lab archive* is a space for performative artistic and civic action that questions the basis of power. It is built on a series of discursive events that explore art's role in social and political transformation through a case study of Soviet modernist architecture in the times of privatization of the public and cultural domains.**

Merging artistic and civic scales, the lab initiated a series of interventions that questioned the planned dismantling of the largest cinema theatre in Lithuania in 2005—the cinema Lietuva in Vilnius—and with this, the destruction of a piece of modernist heritage.

In response to an initial lack of protest to the destruction of a public space, the initiative set a stage to connect a community of 400 members, bringing together heritage activists, architecture students, neighbors, cinema lovers, alternative political movements—and even animals.

In this way, *Pro-test lab* organized and produced a collection of images, props, and relationships through the highly performative act of protesting. The archive is a mapping of these attempts to stage a platform for action through an art project capable of intervening in social and cultural reality through a reclamation of public space.

By probing the work of art as a device for collective action, Nomeda and Gediminas Urbonas furthered

the debate elicited by the conflicts and tensions between privatization and publicness, art and ethics, activism and artistic production. *Pro-test lab* prompted a range of new political subjectivities into being that soon developed into a movement of its own—including several lawsuits—in attempts to secure democratic participation.

①⑧ **Ruta Remake (2002–2004)**

Exhibition version: overhead projector and selection of images laser printed on transparent film 30 x 42 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomeda & Gediminas Urbonas
Sound production: Otto Kränzler
Programming: Steven Greenwood
Special thanks: Division of Image and Sound Documents at the Lithuanian Central State Archive

Ruta Remake was commissioned by Künstlerhaus Stuttgart under the direction of Fareed Armaly in 2002 and further developed for the *Fate of Alien Modes*, curated by Constanze Ruhm for Secession Vienna in 2003, and the 3rd Berlin Biennale curated by Ute Meta Bauer in 2004.

Ruta Remake is in the permanent collection of MACBA, Barcelona.

***Ruta Remake* is a research project and an installation that developed artistic instruments to explore the social construction of women's voices, weaving together layers of gender, sound technology, performance, and fashion.**

The work started from interviews with two Rūtas—a psychologist and a music semiotician—who share their first names with the plant Rūta (lat. *Ruta graveolens*). The latter can be interpreted as a *pharmakon*, meaning both a cure and a poison. This herb also played an important role in the tradition of premodern Baltic witchcraft.

***Ruta Remake* explores and reclaims the symbolic**

relationship between women and the state, taking women's voices as expressions of the psychological impact of the Cold War on multiple generations. Developed for a post-Soviet context, the project studies the cinematic construction of the feminine "victim" identity and its inscription onto the lives of individual women and entire nations alike. By archiving silenced voices, the work restores a possibility of speaking to power. A platform for collaborative endeavors, the work renders diverse outcomes—from performance and a fashion collection to workshops and sound technology.

The *Ruta Remake* instrument is designed for a user's hand to mediate between sets of acoustic samples by using two light-sensitive resistors linked through a MIDI interface. The hand's movement within light casts shadows, and these register output and representation, according to the logic of an inverted film.

The hands recollect the absence of voices, shaping and creating in such a way that the hand becomes both a mapping and a notation device. Thus the new Theramidi-based navigation approaches the user as a performer who charts through the sound archive of voices in a real-time weaving of the dialogue lines into determined patterns that compose a sound fabric.

①⑨ Karaoke (2001)

Exhibition version: overhead projector and selection of images laser printed on transparent film 30 x 42 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept, camera and editing: Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas
Participants: Indrė Bacevičiūtė, Giedrė Debesiūnaitė, Vilija Drobnytė, Gerda Griškoniė, Gytis Ivanauskas, Danutė Jankauskaitė, Jovita Kynaitė, Ona Kvintaitė, Goda Laurinavičiūtė, Aistė Lukšytė, Sigita Mikalauskaitė, Vilija Nausėdaitė, Rūta Navickaitė, Indrė Pačėsaitė, Edita Stundytė, Jurga

Šerpytė, Brigita Urbietytė, Eglė Variakojytė, Vaida Variakojytė
Special thanks: Stasė Stankevičienė, Alvyda Zitikytė, Valdas Kaminskas, Vladas Sinkevičius, Ramutė Bliznikienė, Lolita Sutkaitienė, Antanas Jasena, Antanas Kučinskas

Karaoke was commissioned by CRAC, the Creative Room for Art and Computing, and the Swedish Institute's Partnership for Culture program for the *Out of Money* exhibition, curated by Nils Claesson and Karen Hansson, and presented at the Kulturhuset, Stockholm, Sweden, in 2001.

The ABBA hit song *Money, Money, Money* (1976) was performed via karaoke by volunteers acting as employees of LTB, the Lithuanian Savings Bank.

The piece was an intervention into the specific terrain and time of privatization, at a point when the Lithuanian Savings Bank was taken over by Swedbank (Swedish bank). All the bank's employees—from those in top-level administration to security and cleaners—were all hovering in a state of waiting and uncertainty, and the performance became a means to produce a new reality.

②⑩ Transaction (2000–2002)

Exhibition version: overhead projector and selection of images laser printed on transparent film 30 x 42 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Concept: Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas
Participants: Raimundas Alekna, Gražina Arlickaitė, Rūta Bačiulytė, Daiva Budraitytė, Aušrinė Burneikienė, Zita Čepaitė, Solveiga Daugirdaitė, Viktorija Daujotytė, Patricija Droblytė, Karina Firkavičiūtė, Jolanta Gelumbeckaitė, Rūta Goštautienė, Erika Grigoravičienė, Veronika Janatjeva, Margarita Jankauskaitė, Rasa Kalinauskaitė, Zita Kelmickaitė, Laima Kreivytė, Eglė Laumenskaitė, Dalia Marcinkevičienė, Raimundas Milašiūnas, Marija Aušrinė Pavilionienė, Živilė Pipinytė, Rima Praspaliauskienė, Birutė Purvaneckaitė, Giedrė Purvaneckienė, Dainius Pūras, Daiva Račiūnaitė, Ugnė Siparienė, Lolita Sutkaitienė, Daiva Šabasevičienė, Eugenijus Šarovas, Anelė Vosiliūtė, Marta Vosiliūtė, Sonata Žalneravičiūtė, Audronė Žukauskaitė
Special thanks: Division of Image and Sound Documents at the Lithuanian Central State Archive

The *Transaction* project was commissioned in 2000 by the Kunstinstituut Melly (formerly known as Witte de With) Contemporary Art Center in Rotterdam for the *Strangers and Paradise* exhibition curated by Bartomeu

Mari. It was further developed for the exhibition curated by Dóra Hegyi at the Ludwig Museum in Budapest (2001); an exhibition curated by Inka Schube at the Sprengel Museum Hannover (2002); and Documenta 11 curated by Okwui Enwezor (2002). It was presented at Manifesta 4 (2002), the MACBA Barcelona Museum of Contemporary Art (2008), and the International Center of Photography in New York (2008).

Transaction is in the permanent collection of National Gallery of Art, Lithuania.

Transaction focuses on the search, development, and realization of a scripting process for an ongoing societal narrative that in the exhibition context charts relations between media, memory, politics, and traumatic identity within contemporary Lithuanian culture.

The *Transaction* project was provoked by an interview with the main psychiatrist of Lithuania published in a national magazine. Reflecting on the unease of the post-Soviet transition in the 1990s, the psychiatrist stated that Lithuania had adopted the attitude of a victim during this period. Following his proposal to deploy *transactional analysis*—a method of therapy that analyses a victim scenario with a view to transformative effect—the project addressed the national psyche’s historical traumas by staging encounters with psychiatrists and women intellectuals, in collaboration with the gender studies department of the Central European University and the women’s studies department at Vilnius University. The group discussed female role models in national mass media and compiled the references for their discussions in a system of exchanges. In this way, the project aimed at exploring the ways in which an artwork that draws on scientific modelling can render new tools for a pedagogy of identity formation.

Starting from the absence of female voices, *Transaction* consisted of a collection of interviews, voice listening

sessions, and a film and voice archive assembled by the artists. Using the model of a “drama triangle” borrowed from psychoanalysis, the project was constructed in the form of a juxtaposition of three elements: an archive of films made between 1947 and 1997, a video with feminist intellectuals analyzing how Lithuanian films from the period scripted notions of femininity, a video of Lithuanian psychiatrists commenting on the “script” of the victim.

Transaction followed the model of a three-way dialog in a type of game format, tracing the movement between “what is no longer and what is not yet.” The project dealt with the difficulty of coping with a new reality in Lithuania, suggesting a methodology of collaboration and exchange between feminists, film institutions, and psychiatrists to analyze a current scenario. Navigating the gendered territory of dispatches, *Transaction* unfolds into a kind of “unpacking” of closed-off memories and voices.

②① Green Leaf (1988–1992)

Exhibition version: overhead projector and selection of images laser printed on transparent film 30 x 42 cm. Courtesy of the artists.

Participants: Aidas Bareikis, Džiugas Katinas, Linas Liandzbergis, Julius Ludavičius, Artūras Makštutis, Gintaras Sodeika, Alvydas Vadapalas, Danielė Vyšniauskaitė, Gediminas Urbonas

The art and performance group Žalias Lapas (Green Leaf) was founded by Vilnius-based artists Gediminas Urbonas and Aidas Bareikis, and later joined by Džiugas Katinas, Linas Liandzbergis, Julius Ludavičius, Artūras Makštutis, Gintaras Sodeika, Alvydas Vadapalas, Danielė Vyšniauskaitė, and others.

During its existence in the transitional years from

1988 to 1992, Žalias Lapas produced more than thirty public manifestations in the form of absurd collective actions, hybrid forms of concrete music performances, sound installations, found objects, and environmental actions.

The group experimented with ephemeral and performative modes of art making that probed alternative forms of sense-making and states of being to counter the environmental and civic effects induced by the collapse of the totalitarian state and to work through the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster. Within the context of dramatic economic and political change, the practice of Žalias Lapas pondered ecological repair as a response to social crisis and considered art as an infrastructure capable of supporting temporal autonomy.

With an interest in new collective forms of action and art's participatory and pedagogical role in the construction of public space, Žalias Lapas organized its activities in sites of ecological concern. Often by appropriating and repurposing leftovers of the military-industrial complex, the group availed itself of experimental media that enhanced potential interaction with the environment. In this way, artistic and curatorial inquiries were developed by weaving together concepts such as public pedagogies, plural ecologies, and collective imaginaries.

The character of the group remained open, declining any dogma and manifesto, and respected the individual activities of the members in their search for a collective identity. The group agreed that relevant forms of expression are defined by neither traditions nor innovations.

NOMEDA & GEDIMINAS URBONAS PARTIALLY SWAMPED INSTITUTION 2023 07 27 – 09 24

Curator: Lars Bang Larsen
Exhibition architects: Jurga Daubaraitė, Jonas Žukauskas
Graphic designer: NODE Berlin Oslo
Coordinators: Giedrius Gulbinas, Mindaugas Reklaitis, Aušra Trakšelytė

Exhibition collaborators: Adesola Akinleye, Vincenz Aubry, Remigijus Daubaras, Antanas Gerlikas, Natalia Grom, Nicole L'Huilier, Terry T Kang, Simona Kačinskaitė, Laima Kristina Kazlauskienė, Jonas Kubilius, Kotryna Markevičiūtė, Beatričė Mockevičiūtė, Eglė Nedzinskaitė, Giedrius Pilkis, Gailė Pranckūnaitė, Tobias Putrih, Jan St. Werner, Austėja Tavoraitė, Indrė Umbrasaitė, Rytis Urbanskas, Gabrielė Urbonaitė, MIT Climate Visions

Installation team: Leonas Abromaitis, Gediminas G. Akstinas, Audrius Antanavičius, Norbert Hinc, Andrius Ivanovas, Vidas Juršėnas, Vsevolod Kovalevskij, Almantas Lukoševičius, Tomas Orlovas, Jurgis Paškevičius, Dainius Markevičius, Andrius Melys, Vytautas Narbutas, Ilona Vīrzinkevič, Kazimieras Sližys, Vadim Šamrov, Mažvydas Truklickas

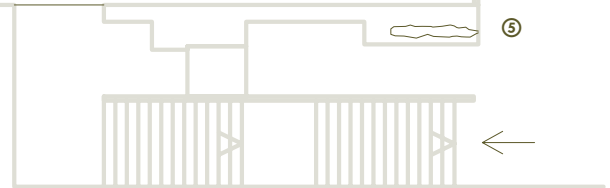
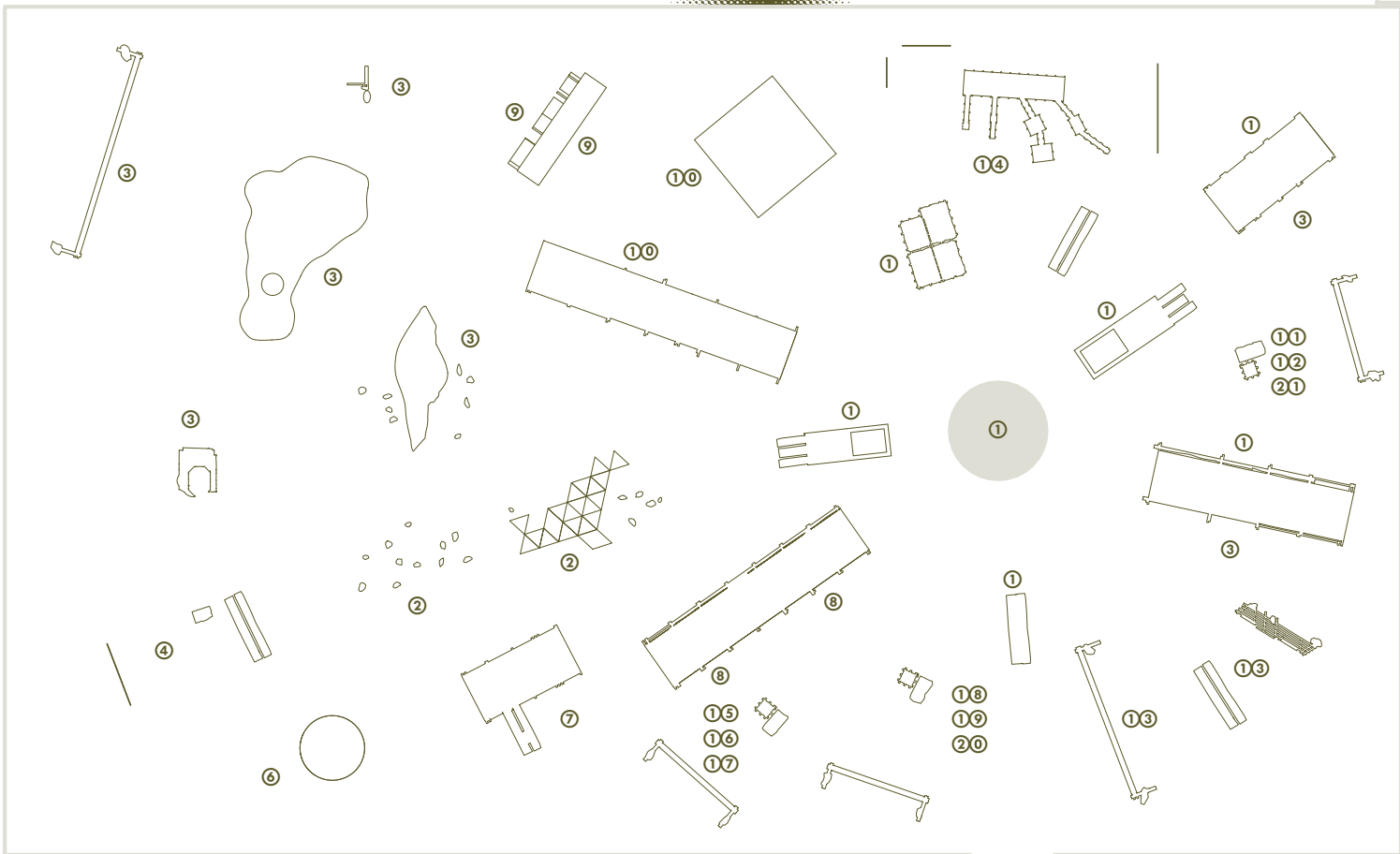
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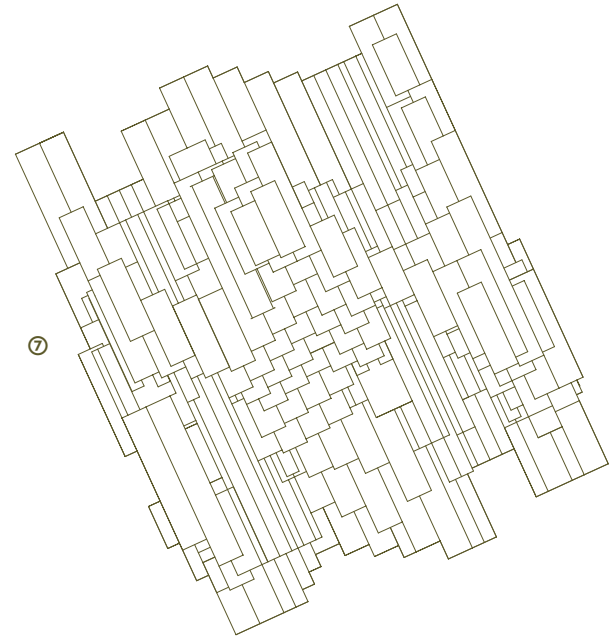
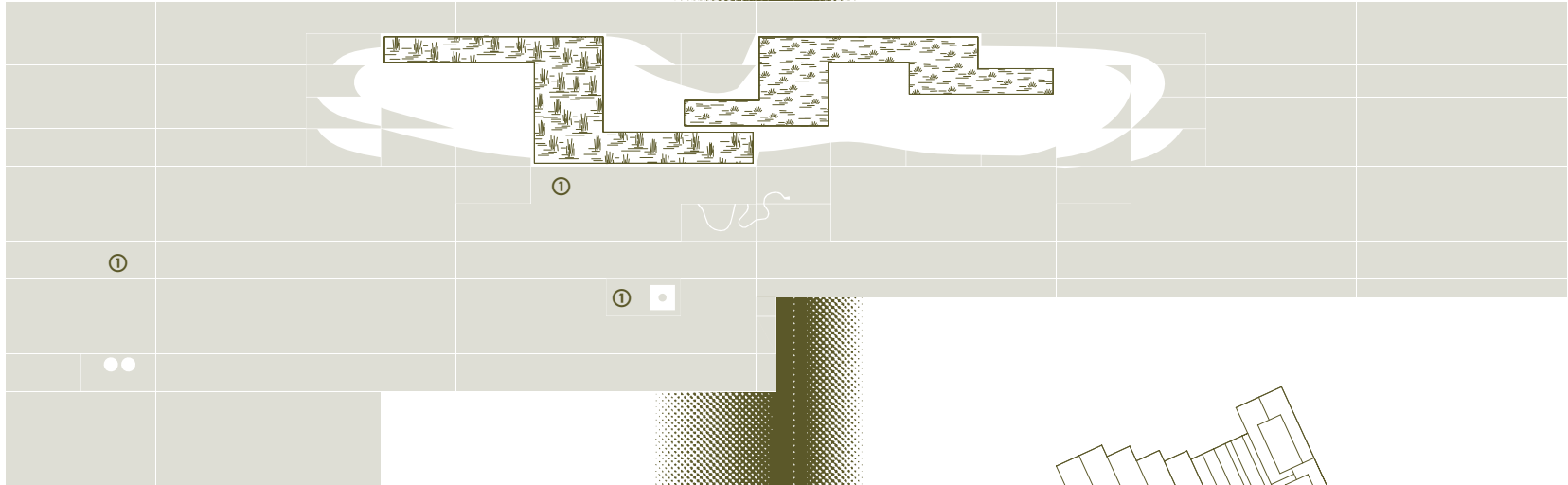
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