

MATTER OF FLUX

Edited by Regine Rapp | Art Laboratory Berlin

Art, Biopolitics, and
Networks with Care

This publication presents a sustainable insight into the research project *MATTER OF FLUX* at Art Laboratory Berlin. It is a part of a group exhibition on art, body biopolitics, and feminist technoscience, as well as a network and a festival from and for international Berlin-based FLINTA* in art, science, and technology. The book assembles essays and statements along with documentation in text and images by around 50 authors whose many fields of expertise create the polyphonic ground of *MATTER OF FLUX*: art, design, filmmaking, curatorial practice, dramaturgy, music, art history, media theory, anthropology, philosophy, sociology, feminist history of science, microbiology, plant ecology, biotechnology, neuroscience, and physical science. *MATTER OF FLUX* is a unique project that combines micro views on the cellular level with macro perspectives on more-than-human ecologies. The project is based upon the careful network creation of research hives.





ILL
OF
NET?

HOW DO MICROORGANISMS
INVISIBLY INFLUENCE
OUR EVERYDAY LIVES?

WH

HOW MANY STORYLINES
DO YOU NOTICE ARE COINED UP
IN THE TOWN
BETWEEN AND THE



What's Inside Your
Mind? (or, How to
Get a Good Night's
Sleep)



indication:

Edited by Regine Rapp | Art Laboratory Berlin

MATTER OF FLUX

Art, Biopolitics, and
Networks with Care

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 6 **Introduction**
Regine Rapp
- 11 **PART I
MATTER OF FLUX
EXHIBITION**
- 12 **LEAKY SYSTEMS**
**On Current Artistic Research
about Body and Biopolitics**
Regine Rapp, Tuçe Erel, Christian de
Lutz
- 28 **ARTISTS' STATEMENTS**
- 29 **The Discomfort of the Pseudo-
menstruating Technoscientific
Body**
WhiteFeather Hunter
- 30 **Self-Care**
Lyndsey Walsh
- 31 **Unborn0x9**
Shu Lea Cheang, Ewen Chardronnet
- 33 **PART II
MATTER OF FLUX
NETWORK, FESTIVAL**
- 34 **RE_SITUATING KNOWLEDGES**
**A Conversation about Building
Networks and Collectively
Preparing a Festival**
Tuçe Erel, Karolina Żyniewicz,
Regine Rapp
- 40 **CRITICAL HISTORY OF
TECHNOLOGY**
- 42 **AFSAR (Asian Feminist Studio for
Art and Research)**
Lecture Performance
Charmaine Poh, Hanwen Zhang,
Park Hye-in, Mooni Perry, Yan Lin
- 44 **Glitter Kitchen and Zine Making
Workshop**
Baldeep Kaur, Selen Solak, Marianna
Szczygielska, Hanwen Zhang
- 48 **LEAKY CYCLES**
- 50 **Clay Eating, Earthly Matters: The
Reading Session, Compost Zine
Lounge, Infinite Returns – A Role-
playing Game**
India Mansour, Gülşah Mursaloğlu,
Cammack Lindsey, Sybille Neumeyer,
Lena Fließbach, Cansu Tekin
- 56 **ALTERNATIVE KNOWLEDGE
PRODUCTION**
- 58 **Instant Storytelling Sessions**
Anne Hölck, Nicola Maria Hochkeppel,
Aslı Dinç

59 The Fluxional Shelf

Kristina Stallvik

62 Liquifying Language. Workshop

Annika Haas

**64 TECHNOLOGIES. SENSORS.
INTERFACES**

**66 Octopussyntric. Workshop,
Performance**

Constanza Piña Pardo, Flo Razoux,
Nicol Rivera Aro, pamela varela

**68 PLANT ENCOUNTERS. PRACTICES,
SITES, COMMUNICATION**

**70 Sites of Vegetal Life.
Performative Lectures**

Käthe Wenzel, Susanne Schmitt, Alice
Cannavà, Lisa Bell Weisdorf

71 MicrocosMoss. Workshop

Susanne Jaschko, Jacky Hess, Eva-Fiore
Kovacovsky, Lucy Powell

75 Alchemic Cooking

Chiara Garbellotto, Sina Ribak

76 HYDRO-RELATIONS

78 Vessels for Water. Workshop

Jemma Woolmore, Lena Johanna
Reisner, Nayeli Vega, Sarah Hermanutz

80 CONJURING STENCH

82 Smell Workshop

Lyndsey Walsh, Alanna Lynch

84 VISITS

**86 Fluid, Leaky Art Practices –
A Studio Visit**

Margherita Pevere, Theresa Schubert

86 Artist Studio Visit

Cammack Lindsey

**87 Exhibition Visit –
“t–issues of care”**

Sybille Neumeyer

**89 Lab Visit – Plant Ecologies,
FU Berlin**

India Mansour

90 Biographies

**95 CREDITS | MATTER OF FLUX
EXHIBITION, NETWORK, FESTIVAL**

96 Imprint

INTRODUCTION

This publication is a concentrated presentation of the research project *MATTER OF FLUX* that Art Laboratory Berlin (ALB) initiated in 2023. It included a group exhibition featuring artworks about bodies, biopolitics, and forms of care and expanded to the building of an extensive cooperative network of Berlin-based FLINTA* artists, scholars, and scientists (FLINTA* stands for female, lesbian, intersex, nonbinary, trans, and agender). Network members worked together to create the *MATTER OF FLUX* festival in the early summer of 2023.

In *PART I: MATTER OF FLUX | EXHIBITION*, Christian de Lutz, Tuçe Erel, and I take our curatorial research as a basis for a theoretical in-depth reflection on current artistic research connected to the body and biopolitics through three artistic positions. In our essay, we critically follow the artists' frameworks on female and nonbinary bodies and their matter, nature, and health. White-Feather Hunter created a living artwork from her own menstrual stem cells that questions the patriarchal preconceptions of medical biology. Lyndsey Walsh developed a programme of care for potentially cancerous cells in a wearable artwork while exploring the genetic inheritance of breast cancer in their family. Shu Lea Cheang with Ewen Chardronnet examined the biopolitics of pregnancy in the age of technological capitalism. More reflections about these concepts also resonate in the texts written by all the exhibiting artists.

The larger part of the book, *PART II: MATTER OF FLUX | NETWORK, FESTIVAL*, is dedicated to a condensed presentation of the evolving FLINTA* network and the festival *MATTER OF FLUX*. During several network meetings in the winter and spring of 2023, Art Laboratory Berlin brought together a large part of the Berlin-based FLINTA* scene in art, science, and technology. From this extensive pool of colleagues, a group of around 40 participants collectively developed a festival programme. Serendipity and radical openness were the motors that led the many network participants to shape the

festival's unique panel discussions, performative lectures, reading groups, cooking, zine-making sessions, and numerous workshops, as well as artist studio, lab, and exhibition visits. The realised concepts and topics of each cluster, which appeared during the festival, at times, as a *lived utopia*, ultimately created the ground for a larger and still ongoing transdisciplinary research process about *matter*. While at risk of minimising their refreshingly complex, multi-layered methodologies, I still want to briefly summarise the various formats within the scope of this introduction.

The cluster *CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY* discussed cosmotekhnics through transcultural practices and developed formats for a feminist technological transformation with a focus on non-plastic glitter. The cluster *LEAKY CYCLES* explored soil and cycles from molecular to planetary scales through reading, zine-making, geophagia, and role-playing activities. The cluster *ALTERNATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION* offered interactive platforms for shared narration through serendipitous assemblages of *objets trouvés*, presented embodied epistemologies through (inter)changing text archives, and introductions of how to (un)learn language through interventions of somatechnics. In the cluster *TECHNOLOGIES. SENSORS. INTERFACES*, they applied technofeminist body politics as the basis for performative approaches to intimate sensory experiences. The cluster *PLANT ENCOUNTERS. PRACTICES, SITES, COMMUNICATION* presented various forms of urban plant research, performed ink-making and distillation practices and offered vibrant transdisciplinary approaches for embodied human-plant relations on moss and the potato plant. The cluster *HYDRO-RELATIONS* invited us to partake in hydrofeminist and more-than-human encounters with water and clay. The workshop *CONJURING STENCH* offered discourses on stink and *bad* smell, ultimately developing a collective scent. Also, the artists' studio, lab, and exhibition visits proved a genuine artistic and scientific care for *matter* – be it cyanobacteria, algae, microbial cellulose, or soil. This publication is merely a dense presentation of a collective research process, which is still unfolding.

Art Laboratory Berlin wants to express immense gratitude to all the *MATTER OF FLUX* contributors for their impressive engagement in the exhibition, the network meetings, and the festival. We also want to thank all local and international *MATTER OF FLUX* cooperation partners for their unwavering support for all parts of the

project (listed on p. 95). Our special thanks and appreciation go to the funding parties – Stiftung Kunstfonds and the funding programme *Neustart Kultur*, Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien, and to the Berlin Senate Department for Culture and Social Cohesion. Funding *MATTER OF FLUX* – including this publication! – helps Art Laboratory Berlin grow and enable our network for future projects.

The *MATTER OF FLUX* network discussed here is, of course, constantly in flux. We hope that those who were involved in 2023 continue engaging in this vibrant network. Colleagues who have not yet contributed are welcome to join us in future projects. Networks behave like organisms – symbiotic, permeable, and always in the process of becoming. Ultimately, this publication is an invitation to share and support one another in our numerous and varied theoretical and practical research processes, always led with a large portion of radical care and openness.

Regine Rapp | Art Laboratory Berlin

PART I

**MATTER
OF FLUX
EXHIBITION**

LEAKY SYSTEMS.

ON CURRENT ARTISTIC RESEARCH ABOUT BODY AND BIOPOLITICS

Essay by

Regine Rapp (art historian, curator, Berlin, Germany)

Tuçe Erel (curator, cultural producer, Berlin, Germany)

Christian de Lutz (curator, researcher, Berlin, Germany/United States)

How can we implement menstrual serum for stem cell research? How can we propose new modes of care within the context of female and nonbinary health? How can we build a biopolitical discourse for both traditional forms and new possibilities of human reproduction?

These are apt questions raised by artists creating a complex basis for important BioArt projects in the last years. In the spring of 2023, the exhibition *MATTER OF FLUX* at Art Laboratory Berlin presented three art projects by the artists WhiteFeather Hunter, Lyndsey Walsh, and Shu Lea Cheang with Ewen Chardronnet. Essential for all the installations is a critical reflection on female and nonbinary bodies and their nature, matter, and health (Rapp et al. 2023a). These three positions combine an astute biopolitical viewpoint with hands-on knowledge of biotechnology, lab practice, and new technologies to address issues at the centre of identity, health, and equity, especially regarding female and nonbinary people. This text elaborates on the theoretical and practical aspects of all three art projects – allowing, in retrospect, a more intense discussion of the issues raised by these works.

Reclaiming Bodily Knowledge

The Witch in the Lab Coat (p. 14/15) is part of WhiteFeather Hunter's PhD research exploring gender and taboo in the life sciences. The work examines the lack of research – until recently – into the use of menstrual blood in the field of medical biotechnology. The artist notes, as does recent scientific research, that menstrual blood is not only a valuable source of stem cells (Lv et al. 2018) but that menstrual blood also contains “hundreds of proteins not found in venous blood” (Debatty 2020).

The project not only analyses this dearth of research into potential uses of menstrual blood but places this lack under Haraway's notion of ‘situated knowledge.’ Modern science, which is male-dominated, has continued to treat menstrual blood as *dirty* without fully investigating whether this is, in fact, the case (Haraway 1988).

From her research, WhiteFeather Hunter has produced a plethora of artistic practices ranging from educational and performative (such as online “BioArt Coven meetings” during the COVID pandemic) to speculative sculptures of what differentiated tissue cultures derived from menstrual stem cells might look like, to a BioArt installation





using endometrial mesenchymal [stem] cells derived from the artist's own menstrual blood. Within this installation, these cells become micro-performative agents, creating in tandem with the artist.

The installation (p. 14/15), on a plinth and under a plexiglass cover, is the centrepiece of the artist's project *The Witch in the Lab Coat* presented at Art Laboratory Berlin. Within the installation, there is a living bioreactor, made up of hand-blown glass chambers – created in collaboration with the glass artist Emma Lashar – and tubing, holding the stem cells and nutrients, which are pumped through the sculpture and a DIY incubator. Hunter created the prototype in Perth at SymbioticA Centre of Excellence in Biological Arts at the University of Western Australia (SymbioticA), but the first exhibited version was realised in Berlin with stem cells that were frozen and transported from Australia and revived and grown in Berlin at the laboratory of Dr. Susanne Wegmann at the Deutsches Zentrum für Neurodegenerative Erkrankungen (DZNE).

During the exhibition, stem cell colonies grew in several vessels, noticeable as a translucent white sediment; the red colour in the installation was actually the nutrient medium. This installation continued to grow for weeks beneath a photo of Hunter wearing a lab coat with a motorised pipetting controller and the slogan “Happiness is a warm gun” (p. 14 below). This *hacked* lab coat, slyly mocking the masculine nomenclature of laboratory equipment and forms, also places the artist performatively at the intersection of art, technofeminism, and science, while exposing the situated rituals of supposedly objective laboratory practices.

Two to three weeks into the exhibition, additional *agents* were discovered – yeast was also found growing in the bioreactor. Finally, five weeks into the exhibition, sometime between the 29th and the 30th of June 2023, particles of the yeast biofilm started to clog the tubing, leading to leakage. After an attempt to fix the situation, the artist decided that the pump and incubator would be turned off. Team members of Art Laboratory Berlin and the artist, remotely present by video feed, performed a wake for the stem cells, which slowly died over the remainder of the exhibition.

The Witch in the Lab Coat explores menstrual blood as a rarefied signifier, which has until recently defied science, literally situating the latter within the field of misogyny, patriarchy, and capitalism.

Yet, by using science itself as a medium, Hunter also allows menstrual stem cells to be a potential force for liberating science from the modern male structures that formed it.

Body Politics of Care, Health, and Health Care

In Lyndsey Walsh's *Self-Care* (p. 18/19), living cellular agents are closely interwoven with the artist's own autobiographical context. The artwork radically challenges the conventional binary dichotomies of bodily health conditions like *diseased/healthy* and gender associations of *female/male*. A custom-made wearable chest binder (p. 19) houses a living breast cancer cell line with the same genetic mutation as Walsh – the BRCA1 gene (Walsh 2023).

This wearable is made out of silicone and carries two pockets that are soft pouches containing the living cells (p. 18/19). There are embroidery threads in the wearable, specifically referencing the mastectomy scars of the artist's mother and her creative practice of embroidery. The chest binder can be considered a strong tool for autonomous nonbinary agency. The artist remarks that "the very action of binding the breast, as part of non-binary identity, is something that is more malleable and adaptive and actively rejects signifiers of gender" (Walsh/Rapp 2023). The living artwork was conceived with an intense care programme: For the Berlin exhibition, the artist prepared the living cancer cells in the Hegemann Lab, the Department of Experimental Biophysics, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. Walsh also fed the cells at Art Laboratory Berlin on-site every three days throughout the seven weeks of the exhibition's running time.

The artist's choice to work with living cancer cells in their installation emphasises the interest in making kin with the genetic mutation, "staying with the trouble" (Haraway 2016). With the wearable, Walsh also gets rid of the attributions of the normative demands that society has placed on them in the context of the medical gaze. This touches upon the field of inequality in healthcare, as non-binary people often have more health problems and worse healthcare results than their cisgender peers (Downing and Przedworski 2018).

Walsh implements video as a source for biopolitical storytelling (p. 26 above): In one video, we can see archival film footage in B/W of women with mastectomies from the 1940s - mid-1960s in the





United States, whereas the audio conveys an ultimately personal story, a conversation between the artist and their mother about their perspectives on living with BRCA1 gene mutation. The artist's inherent body-political critique resonates with the socio-political aspects of breast cancer: In 1980, Audre Lorde remarked that socially sanctioned breast prostheses would make women with breast cancer invisible and isolated (Lorde, 1980). Around twenty years later, Lisa Cartwright stressed that “the media-savvy breast cancer activism that has emerged in the late 1990s constructs the breast cancer community around a set of signifiers that includes white, straight, middle and upper class, urban, educated, professional, and conservative” (Cartwright, 1998).

For the Berlin installation (**p. 18**), the artist chose the cell line HCC1937 (collected in 1995 from a then 19-year-old white woman with stage 2B breast cancer). They picked this cell line as it mirrors all the fears that their family members and the doctors would have, “as if the cancer could crop Lyndsey's youth, femininity, and whiteness” (Walsh 2023).

Self-Care picks up on breast cancer narratives – “the female body with breast cancer is a site of struggle over meanings in both social and medical contexts” (Langellier and Sullivan 1998, 77). In another video, Walsh reads a letter to their mother, openly reflecting on their burden with the diagnosis of BRCA1 gene mutation at the (too) early age of 18, comparing the challenge of constantly carrying on the inherited mutation like a “family heirloom” and articulating the difficult challenges during many years of regular doctors' appointments.

Ectogenesis in the Making (or Deconstructing)

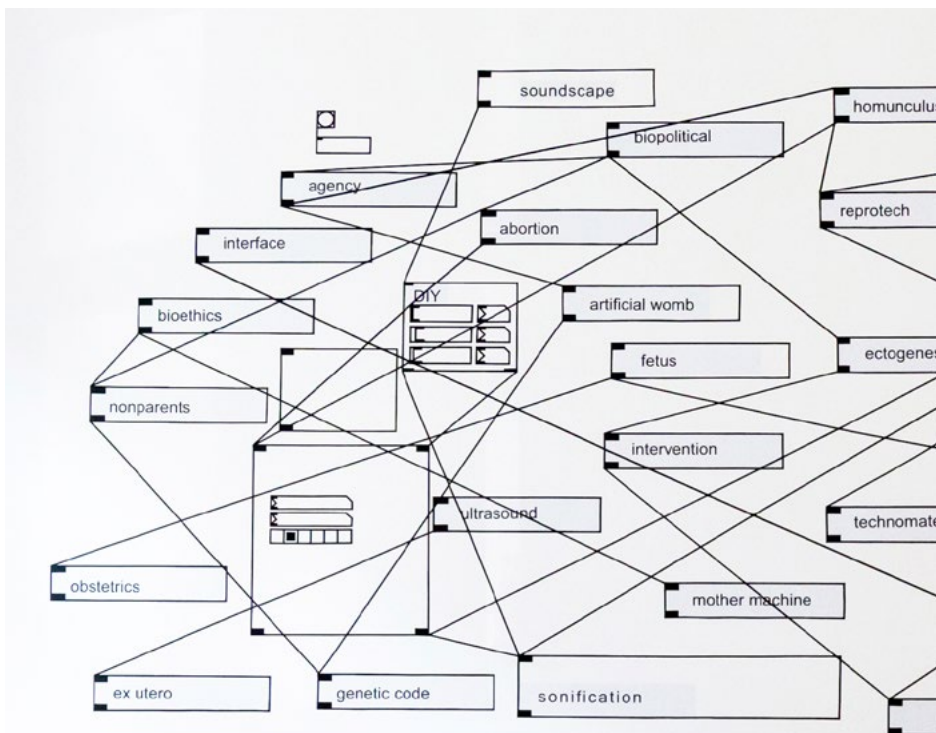
Shu Lea Cheang and Ewen Chardronnet's work *Unborn0x9* (**p. 22/23**) is a fork-out project developed in 2016. Art Laboratory Berlin chose part of the project's installation for the *MATTER OF FLUX* exhibition and the reading group sessions for the series *Permeable Bodies*.

Unborn0x9 emerged with the collaboration of echOpen fablab, which develops open-source and low-cost echo-stethoscopes with smartphone applications. *Unborn0x9* is a prototype of a creative tool that hacks ultrasonic waves – inaudible for the human ear – in a sonic conversion, allowing the interpretation of an audiovisual and ultrasonic emotional score by performers and musicians.

In many of Art Laboratory Berlin's discourses, hacking is a tool of critique, a research methodology, and a possibility to go beyond heavily regulated and hegemonic structures. *Unborn0x9* hacks existing technological tools to speculate and open a discussion on three main themes connected to human reproduction: ectogenesis, ultrasound, and surrogacy. These themes were also the core of the three consecutive reading groups, which welcomed three experts in their field as reading group leaders: Elizabeth Chloe Romanis, a researcher in healthcare law and bioethics; Julie Roberts, a researcher in reproduction politics; and Anindita Amajumdar, a researcher on commercial surrogacy, kinship, and infertility (Rapp et al. 2023b).

Ectogenesis was coined by scientist J. B. S. Haldane in 1924 "to describe how human pregnancy would one day give way to artificial wombs" (Rosen 2003, 67). Since the *MATTER OF FLUX* exhibition focused on female and nonbinary bodies and their health, *Unborn0x9* discusses the utopic/dystopic possibility of ectogenesis that brings counter-arguments: the liberation of the female body as the caregiver of a baby vs. disassociating human mothering instincts in the reproduction process. "Ectogenesis promises a technological dream of developing 'outside' the maternal body by enabling gestation 'inside' a machine that strives to simulate the conditions of the womb; a machine that acts as if it were a mother" (Aristarkhova 2005, 43). Besides ectogenesis, the project deals with ultrasound technology, a scanning method that scholars claim reinforces the bonding of the mother to their baby. Whereas in surrogacy, the discussion shifts to the exploitation of the female body as a biological machine for bearing children for those who can afford it.

The project *Unborn0x9* had been installed in various locations before it arrived at Art Laboratory Berlin. However, this time, it was presented in a completely different set-up. The installation in Berlin consists of a wall piece image including important keywords about reproduction (**p. 22 below**). The sculpture is a fictitious ectogenesis machine, including a robot arm scanning a baby in an artificial womb. One can observe the ultrasound image on a small screen and a sound piece based on the ultrasound data. Due to a worn-out robotic arm, Shu Lea Cheang came up with a new iteration of the presentation, as reproducing the robotic arm on short notice was impossible, and she did not want to present it without its function. Therefore, she tore apart and deconstructed the artwork to show it

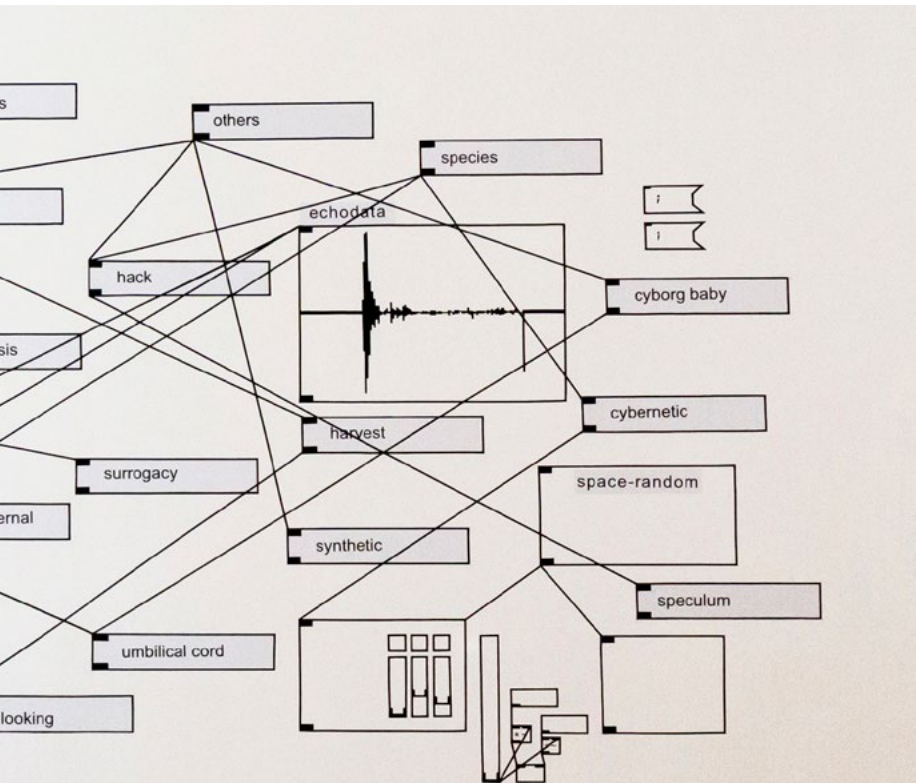
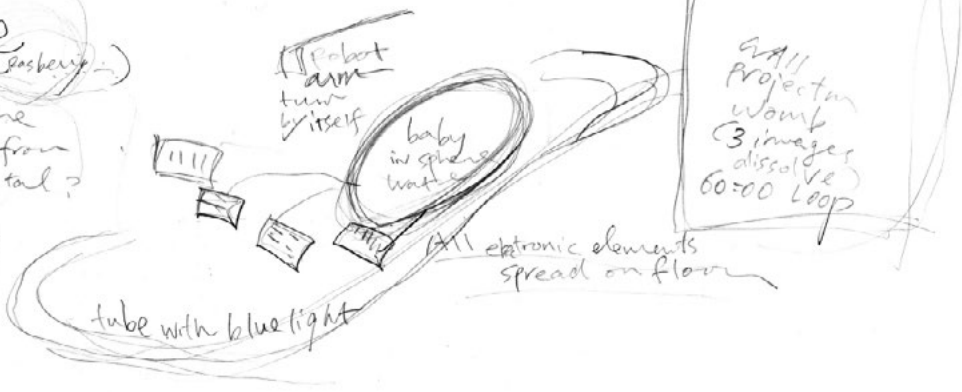


UNBORN 0x9
Sketch
24/05

Wall patch

Questions

- (1) Robot arm
turns along
robot through passageway
- (2) can baby sphere
be detached from
glass pedestal?
- (3) Video & Audio
to run?



as a dismantled piece, bringing laboratory or workshop aesthetics to the exhibition space. However, it went beyond this: It was a statement that one cannot rely entirely on technology. It may have a bug or an unexpected error, and hardware can wear out, but human error is also always part of the story.

Résumé

All three positions in *MATTER OF FLUX* combine art, theory, science, and technology to make biopolitical challenges on an overburdened and obsolete status quo – revealing *leaky systems*. White-Feather Hunter uses multi-disciplinary approaches to address the taboo of menstruation in medical biology by highlighting the lack of scientific investigation into this theme due to social influence on science's supposed objectivity (situated knowledge). By exploring menstrual blood as a rarefied signifier, she uncovers the traditional power structures which dominate academic medical science, scrutinising the influence of gender and taboo in the life sciences. Lyndsey Walsh combines elements of care for both the human and more-than-human (i.e., cellular and genetic) while addressing the objectification of both women and cancer patients in the context of the patriarchal gaze. Their artistic practice, based in a large part in the biological laboratory, emphasises a practice of care, investigation, and critical reflection in which gender identity, genetic mutation, and life and death meet. Shu Lea Cheang and Ewen Chardronnet make use of various media – robotics, video, text, and installation. Along with the combined academic and performative actions of three reading groups and the accompanying web platform, they address complex biopolitical and bioethical questions about reproduction, pregnancy, and women's bodies under the influence of technology and capitalism.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aristarkhova, Irina. 2005. "Ectogenesis and Mother as Machine." *Body & Society* 11 (3): 43–59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1357034X05056190>.
- Cartwright, Lisa. 1998. "Community and the Public Body in Breast Cancer Media Activism." *Cultural Studies*, 12:2, 117–138. <https://doi.org/10.1080/095023898335500>.
- Debatty, Régine. 2020. "WhiteFeather Hunter, 'The Witch in the Lab Coat.'" *We Make Money, Not Art*, 2 November. <https://we-make-money-not-art.com/whitefeather-hunter-the-witch-in-the-lab-coat>.

Downing, J. M. and J.M. Przedworski. 2018. "Health of transgender adults in the US", 2014–2016. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 55(3), 336–344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2018.04.045>.

Haraway, Donna. 2016. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Experimental Futures. Durham London: Duke University Press.

Haraway, Donna. 1988. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14, 3: 575–599.

Langellier, K. M. and C. F. Sullivan. 1998. "Breast Talk in Breast Cancer Narratives." *Qualitative Health Research* 8 (1): 76–94. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104973239800800106>.

Lorde, Audre. 1980. *The Cancer Journals*. San Francisco: Spinsters Ink.

Lv, Haining, Yali Hu, Zhanfeng Cui, and Huidong Jia. 2018. "Human Menstrual Blood: A Renewable and Sustainable Source of Stem Cells for Regenerative Medicine." *Stem Cell Research & Therapy* 9 (1): 325. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13287-018-1067-y>.

Rapp, Regine, Tuçe Erel, and Christian de Lutz. 2023a. *MATTER OF FLUX*. Exhibition. Art Laboratory Berlin, <https://artlaboratory-berlin.org/exhibitions/matter-of-flux>.

Rapp, Regine; Tuçe Erel, and Christian de Lutz. 2023b. *PERMEABLE BODIES*. Series of Reading Groups, Talks, Workshops, and Podcasts (May – December 2023). Art Laboratory Berlin, <https://artlaboratory-berlin.org/events/permeable-bodies-program-overview>.

Rosen, Christine. 2003. "Why Not Artificial Wombs?" *The New Atlantis*, no. 3: 67–76.

Walsh, Lyndsey. 2023. *Sonic Ecologies*. Podcast series, episode 2. Art Laboratory Berlin, <https://artlaboratory-berlin.org/research/sonic-ecologies>.

Walsh, Lyndsey and Regine Rapp. 2023. Email conversation about *Self-Care* (17 November 2023).

IMAGES

P. 9 below, 14/15 and 26 below WhiteFeather Hunter: *The Witch in the Lab Coat*, 2019 - ongoing, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: Tim Deussen

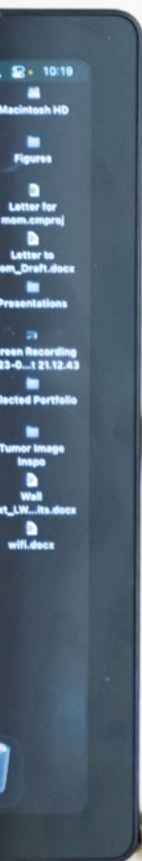
P. 18/19 and 26 above Lyndsey Walsh: *Self-Care*, 2021-ongoing, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: Tim Deussen

P. 22 above and 27 Shu Lea Cheang, Ewen Chardronnet: *Unborn0x9*, installation, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: Tim Deussen

P. 9 above, 22 above and 27 Shu Lea Cheang, Ewen Chardronnet: Reading Group *Unborn0x9*, Live-Performance | Reading Group ECTOGENESIS, *Unborn0x9* installation in background, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: ALB

P. 23 above Shu Lea Cheang: *Unborn0x9*, sketch for the installation at Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023





ARTISTS' STATEMENTS

WhiteFeather Hunter (artist, scholar, Australia/United States/Canada)

Lyndsey Walsh (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany/United States)

Shu Lea Cheang (artist, filmmaker, Paris, France/Taiwan)

Ewen Chardronnet (artist, journalist, curator, Paris, France)

The Discomfort of the Pseudo-menstruating Technoscientific Body

WhiteFeather Hunter

The cells contained inside my bioreactor were from endometrial tissue explants that I cultured directly from my collected menstrual fluid. Biologically, menstruation is a process of leaking. We all have leaky bodies, but menstruation is perhaps the most abject leak in terms of cultural taboos, subject to numerous control or containment measures. Yet, leak, we *must*. The leak of menstruation is its defining characteristic - there is no other way to menstruate.

My bioreactor is a pseudo-menstruating technoscientific body in that the stem cells and tissues inside continue to build over a period of weeks while some die and are expelled from one uterine-shaped glass vessel to another. The exception is, however, that it *must not leak*. Not only would leakiness disrupt the suction-based flow of the peristaltic pump and tubing circuit that distributes nutrient fluid to keep cells alive, but more so than menstrual blood, cell nutrient fluid is regulated as a biohazard.

After installing the bioreactor, I hovered around it for hours, watching for leaks. The tubing joins on each vessel consist of a glass neck at either end, over which a section of tubing was securely placed and covered with heat shrink. The join was secured with a zip tie and clear polish around the edge of the heat shrink. Despite these measures, two of the vessels started to drip at the joins, likely because the necks were slightly bent and the tubing couldn't maintain a grip.

The solution was to wrap each of these with a layer of film to create a seal. The remedy sustained a leak-proof system for five weeks, though it looked *doctored* and inevitably leaked again. This was something I had to accept, as an artist but also a philosopher: the leakiness is what made it real, less mechanical, apropos of bodily function, and a living state in general. The discomfort of the pseudo-menstruating technoscientific body is that, like real bodies, it risks functioning in a messy form. It might *misbehave* and cannot truly be contained.

Text excerpted/edited from Hunter, WhiteFeather. 2023. "My bioreactor has a yeast infection." *Frantic Panties*, 27 October. <https://whitefeatherhunter.substack.com/p/my-bioreactor-has-a-yeast-infection>.

Self-Care

Lyndsey Walsh

Self-Care is a multi-media artwork and installation exploring notions of care, labour, intergenerational trauma, and bodies, as well as the impact of the gender binary on so-called *female* healthcare. *Self-Care* aims to critically examine notions of care, the role of gender in medicine, ableism, and familial relationships with diseases while attempting to reclaim bodily autonomy over a body caught at the crossroads of neoliberalist healthcare agendas and genetic fatalism.

The work features a specially designed chest binder housing living breast cancer cells, which allows the artist to take on the caring responsibilities of their cancer before it emerges in their body due to Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer Syndrome. Through this device, the artist explores caring systems and attempts to reclaim an impending and looming threat of violence and medical fragmentation done onto the breasts as liberation through non-binary gender expression. The work also features two video pieces charting the landscape of intricacies related to inherited diseases through intergenerational and autoethnographic explorations.

Self-Care is a rehearsal of embodiment for bodies constantly transgressing the boundaries between sick and not sick. It explores the hopes, successes, and failures that emerge from attempts to live with a body and all its proclaimed faults. The work is also an archive of the multiple mutants and subjectivities, as described by Jason Zingsheim's "Mutation Identity Theory," that come together to form a sense of self and the connection the self has with its body (Zingsheim 2010).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Zingsheim, Jason. 2010. "Developing Mutational Identity Theory: Evolution, Multiplicity, Embodiment, and Agency." *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 11, 1: 24–37. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708610386546>.

Unborn0x9

Shu Lea Cheang, Ewen Chardronnet

The *Unborn0x9* project began in 2016 with an invitation for Makers.info to build an art project in residence with the echOpen open-source ultrasound imaging project for smartphones at the Hôtel-Dieu Hospital in Paris. Shu Lea Cheang and Ewen Chardronnet proposed *Unborn0x9*, a project with different chapters. The first objective of *Unborn0x9* was to develop a fork of the open-source ultrasound probe and its software patch to create a haptic tool producing both sound and image from ultrasound conversion.

To prepare for the audiovisual performances, the artists then conducted workshops focused on collecting audio testimonies and experiences of parenthood from anonymous volunteers, where this experience was either lived, imposed, desired, or unwanted. The recordings were later used in the performances. The workshops also served to discuss typologies of motherhood, ranging from pro-choice to surrogacy or ectogenesis, and aimed to initiate deeper reflection on the socio-political conditions of desired or unwanted pregnancies.

Through this initial work on the political dimensions of ultrasound imaging and the potential uses of the open tool in improving access to healthcare or self-help contexts, *Unborn0x9* became interested in 2017 with the public announcement of the first lamb fetal Biobag developed at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. The following year, Eindhoven University of Technology also announced its commitment to developing a "Perinatal Life Support System" technology to replace open-air incubators for the very premature with artificial wombs that have AI-managed placentas.

Pregnancy is here integrated into a high-tech vision of the body as a biotic component and cybernetic communication system. But what is the status of a fetus that has been transferred to an artificial uterus after five months? Is it born? Unborn? The use of "0x9" in the *Unborn0x9* project is there to remind us of all the stages from 0 to 9 months and the moral status we want to give to this not-yet-human, not-yet-born.

PART II

**MATTER
OF FLUX**

**NETWORK
FESTIVAL**

RE-SITUATING KNOWLEDGES.

A CONVERSATION ABOUT BUILDING NETWORKS AND COLLECTIVELY PREPARING A FESTIVAL

Tuğçe Erel (curator, cultural producer, Berlin, Germany)
Karolina Żyniewicz (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany/Poland)
Regine Rapp (art historian, curator, Berlin, Germany)

Regine Rapp: With the project *MATTER OF FLUX* (MoF), Art Laboratory Berlin (ALB) created a research network and conceived a festival from and for Berlin-based FLINTA* in art, science, and technology (FLINTA* stands for female, lesbian, intersex, nonbinary, trans, and agender). We collaborated with *FEMeeting: Women in Art, Science, and Technology*, an international conference format initiated first in 2017 by artist Marta de Menezes and artist and scholar Dalila Honorato, to discuss art and science projects undertaken by women worldwide to strengthen an international network. Since all three of us had experienced in person the giving openness, solidarity, and constructive network effect during various *FEMeeting* conferences, we were convinced of the high value of creating a FLINTA* only space for a specific time and place. We were aware that our particular interest in creating a Berlin-based network would prove quite challenging – considering the numerous, varied scenes and archipelagos in art, culture, and academia in Berlin.

Tuçe Erel: After receiving funding from Neustart Kultur, Kunstfonds, and the Berlin Senate, our work started in the January of 2023. The ALB team started to reach out to artists, scientists, researchers, cultural curators, and producers in the fields of art, science, and technology. The goal was to (re)connect with the Berlin-based FLINTA* community. We also asked our community to suggest further names, which allowed us to reach out to more than 200 colleagues. Around 60 of them attended three preparatory meetings, and about 40 contributed to the festival content in the June of 2023. For our MoF preparatory meetings, we had three goals: finding synergies, creating a network, and preparing a festival. ALB chose three group leaders – artist and researcher Käthe Wenzel, artist and researcher Lyndsey Walsh, and Sina Ribak, researcher for ecologies and the arts – to hand over the lead and moderate the groups in the three preparatory meetings. These meetings were realised during February and March of 2023 at ALB and neighbouring project spaces. After each meeting, we three came together to structure and visualise the results.

Karolina Żyniewicz: MoF was not only a transdisciplinary festival, but it was also a sociological experiment and a collective cognitive endeavour. Serving as organisers was a fascinating opportunity to observe how people build relations and how they start doing things together. Some colleagues were open to leaving their comfort zones and sharing their ideas with others, and some were more eager to

show and promote their individual practices. As facilitators, our work was to build a framework for all processes without domination. In the end, we did ethnographic observations of the collective work. The main rule of MoF was to understand care broadly. It was crucial to build a safe space where people respected each other and listened to one another, even those with different points of view. The feeling of security would also bring the freedom of creation. People, existing in entanglement with significant nonhuman others, were at the centre of all processes. MoF served as a framing for situated knowledge production based on embodied experiences and intra-actions.

Regine Rapp: In her essay *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective*, Donna Haraway proposed a 'feminist science,' acknowledging and locating its bias and revealing power structures like gender power, racial power, and other (Haraway 1988). Building a FLINTA* community of specialists in art, science, and technology and creating a festival meant for us to *re-situate knowledges*, contextualise research, and (re)connect with work in situ.

Karolina Żyniewicz: In the first stage, the MoF participants split up into three teams that were defined randomly. Each team was working in a different location, creating mind maps. The starting point was the notion of *matter of flux*, which served as a centre for the mind maps. There were two categories of notions: potential topics to work on and potential formats of working. These categories guided MoF members to form thematic clusters in the second stage of the project.

Tuçe Erel: After the second session, it became clear that the three groups should regroup along keywords that were strongly communicated in the sessions. Finally, six clusters emerged for the festival programme: *CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY*, *LEAKY CYCLES*, *TECHNOLOGIES. SENSORS. INTERFACES*, *PLANT ENCOUNTERS*, *ALTERNATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION*, and *HYDRO-RELATIONS*.

Regine Rapp: Since the *Synaesthesia* conference in 2013, ALB has been melding international speakers from art, science, and other disciplines within its conference panels, and more than 90% of all speakers have always been female or nonbinary. With the MoF festival, however, it was remarkable to see that the network of participants

and festival contributors decided to hold open formats and shifted away from the conventional formats of panel discussions and lecture presentations. By literally following the *matter* of our various research fields and developing the festival from an inductive approach, the festival was shaped with numerous interactive and performative formats, such as cooking actions, reading groups, workshops, walks, and performances. The main site of the festival, the cultural centre PA58, located around the corner of ALB, offered an ideal and welcoming space, with a theatre hall, café, kitchen, and terrace. Here, our contents could literally meld together on-site. With artist studio, lab, and exhibition visits, the participants and the public had the chance to meet the colleagues “in situ” to gain insights into their work situations.

Tuçe Erel: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY, TECHNOLOGIES. SENSORS. INTERFACES, and PLANT ENCOUNTERS started to take shape during the first two preparatory sessions. *PLANT ENCOUNTERS* was the most crowded working group. Therefore, it was also divided into three smaller groups with the workshop *MicroCosMoss*, led by artists, a scientist, and a curator, the cooking performance *Alchemic Cooking*, and the lecture *Sites of Vegetal Life*. In the latter, Käthe Wenzel and Susanne Schmitt collaborated for the first time. Their shared interest evolved into a theatre lecture performance at the PA58’s theatre stage, where they held a real-time distillation and natural ink-making station while they conversed about their practices and their challenges. It was fascinating to observe and facilitate new collaborations and initiate future projects.

Karolina Żyniewicz: The cluster *ALTERNATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION* focused on finding new methods of creating and sharing knowledge about technology. The cluster members – as in most clusters, included a transdisciplinary group of artists, scientists, and cultural players – produced the formats of *Instant Storytelling*, *Fluxonial Shelf*, and *Liquifying Language*. With this, they proposed several formats of activities, challenging traditional and academically routed cognitive methods.

Tuçe Erel: *CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY* brought together scientists, artists, and academics and decided to propose and execute their events collectively. For instance, Hanwen, Baldeep, Marianna, and Selen from the *CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY* cluster came together at the very first meeting, and they stayed together

throughout the whole preparation process. From the first meeting, they found a common theme: the consumption of plastic and its connection to cultural differences and similarities between Eastern and Western societies. *Glitter Kitchen* emerged from this interest, and the material cooked in the lecture performance was also used in their zine-making workshop. A video recording of the lecture performance can be found on the ALB YouTube channel.

Karolina Żyniewicz: The main intention of the MoF project was to create a ground for the Berlin-based FLINTA* community – being both friends and possible collaborators. In our current capitalistic and individualistic reality, it is challenging to perform something based on collective thinking. Social relations keep disappearing, so it is crucial to form some contexts for their possible preservation. The MoF festival in the June 2023 had the common goal for the created community to sustain the relations formed during the preparatory sessions for a few months. Maintaining these connections beyond the festival is now a totally new challenge. It means that the created context has to also be extended. How long can we serve as a platform for the MoF community? It is hard to predict. *Re-situating knowledges* cannot be precisely planned and structured. We are open to surprises, mistakes, and even failure. We are, first and foremost, curious.

Regine Rapp: The collectively manifested festival formats allowed us to spatialise our research projects, practise theory, and de-hierarchise structures. It was important for us to choose transdisciplinary formats throughout the entire festival intentionally. Finally, it is something that we understand as a posthuman practice of knowledge production that comes close to the notion of an affirmative bond. Rosi Braidotti once stressed this very *affirmative bond* as one “that locates the subject in the flow of relations with multiple others” (Braidotti 2013, 50). It is fascinating and rewarding to see that the cluster activities and working groups of the MoF festival can continue with their collective research beyond the festival. Certain formats have continued, and some workshop initiators have extended and repeated their activities. So, the MoF network is alive and continues to shape and transit. We plan to re-install the activities and work with future forms of a MoF festival at ALB. In the end, our idea of the MoF network also means that participants will come and go, new FLINTA* colleagues are welcome to join the MoF network, and the discussion should stay vital and open to new topics and formats.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Braidotti, Rosi. 2013. *The Posthuman*. Cambridge and Malden.

Haraway, Donna. 1988. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies*, 14(3), 575-599.

IMAGE

P. 39 Baldeep Kaur, Selen Solak, Marianna Szczypińska, Hanwen Zhang: *CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY* Zine Making Workshop, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: ALB



CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

AFSAR (Asian Feminist Studio for Art and Research) Lecture Performance

Charmaine Poh (artist, Berlin, Germany/Singapore)

Hanwen Zhang (curator, researcher, Berlin, Germany/China)

Park Hye-in (curator, Berlin, Germany/South Korea)

Mooni Perry (artist, Berlin, Germany/South Korea)

Yan Lin (writer, Berlin, Germany/China)

Glitter Kitchen and Zine Making Workshop

Baldeep Kaur (researcher, English Literature/Science & Technology Studies, Berlin, Germany/India)

Selen Solak (artist and researcher, Berlin, Germany/Türkiye)

Marianna Szczygielska (feminist historian of science, Berlin, Germany/Poland)

Hanwen Zhang (curator, researcher, Berlin/China)

The corset belongs to Horror Barbie-my now defunct alias on FetLife. It is made of a mixture of polyurethane and polyvinyl chloride.

and *Aspergillus sydowii* can effectively degrade PVC.

Aspergillus fumigatus, a saprotroph widespread in nature, is typically found in soil and decaying organic matter, such as compost heaps.

estimated several hundred spores each day; typically, these are quickly eliminated by the immune system in healthy individuals.

In immunocompromised individuals, such as organ transplant recipients and people with AIDS or leukemia, the fungus is more likely to become pathogenic, over-running the host's weakened defenses and causing a range of diseases generally termed aspergillosis. Due to the recent increase in the use of immunosuppressants to treat human illnesses, it is estimated that *A. fumigatus* may be responsible for over 600,000 deaths annually.

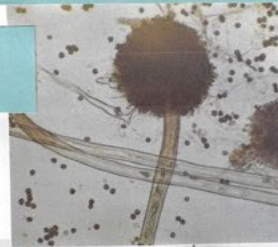
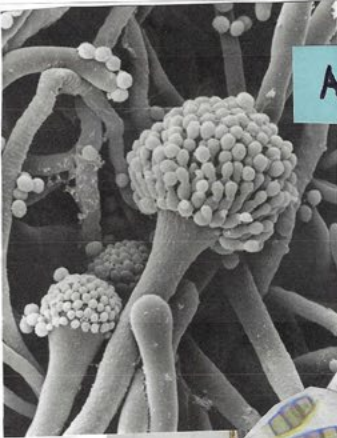
COMPOSTING HORROR BARBIE

Two species of the Ecuadorian fungus *Pestalotiopsis* are capable of biodegrading polyurethane in aerobic and anaerobic conditions such as found at the bottom of landfills.

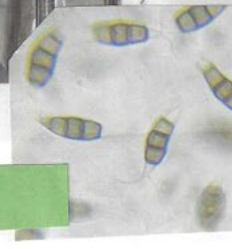
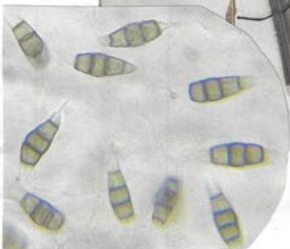
Pestalotiopsis species are known as plant pathogens, common endophytes or saprobes in a variety of hosts and environments.

Horror Barbie left FetLife, her corset remains. Her identity and persona were transformed into new interests, practices and relations. How can her corset also be transformed?

ASPERGILLUS



PESTALOTIS



AFSAR (Asian Feminist Studio for Art and Research) Lecture Performance

Charmaine Poh, Hanwen Zhang, Park Hye-in, Mooni Perry, Yan Lin

The understanding of technology tends to be homogenised. It now stands as an entity that projects the desires and anxieties of our modern society. Technology, as a homogenised entirety, is produced in the process of Westernised modernisation over the globe. We've entered an era of technological acceleration, yet our thinking and reflection on technology have stagnated, leading to an impasse. Thus, creating an openness towards technology is critical. The Hong Kongese philosopher Yuk Hui suggests facilitating individuation of thinking, i.e., to start a process of dealing with incompatibility (for example, between Western and Eastern philosophy), to restructure the system and to produce diversity. Examining technology from a historical viewpoint not only reshapes our perception of it but also promotes varied interpretations and broadens our cognitive horizons.

Since the beginning of the year 2023, our group, the Asian Feminist Studio for Art and Research (AFSAR), has been operating a study group on the topic of “rethinking technology,” challenging the prevailing homogenised understanding of it. We follow the latest book *Art and Cosmotekhnics* by Yuk Hui, which proposes the concept of “Cosmotekhnics” to advocate technodiversity and a different imagination of technology. The cosmos is not something universal since we always observe it from a particular angle, a particular locality, so the cosmos is always linked to localities. By thinking of multiple cosmologies, we have the opportunity to reassess the significance of locality and the history of technology and rewrite our futures.

Every Sunday morning, we gathered on Discord, a platform where we document our journey and regularly exchange our sporadic insights and encounters. In this one-hour gathering, we would turn on the voice channel and give a stage to one of the study group members, who leads the session by sharing close-reading notes of the text, and afterwards, we would ask questions and respond to each other.

The lecture performance presented during the *MATTER OF FLUX* Festival is a result of micro-collaborations between study group members. Being part of the *MATTER OF FLUX* Festival offered us a tangible space to bring out slices of our ongoing thoughts and reflections to exchange with our extended communities and broader audiences in Berlin.



CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

Glitter Kitchen and Zine Making Workshop

Baldeep Kaur, Selen Solak, Marianna Szczygielska, Hanwen Zhang

Often becoming ubiquitous and invisible, technology shapes our daily lives in significant ways. How often do you think about the innovation and knowledge that went into producing a single speck of glitter? These everyday materials and processes have their own histories that often reveal themselves as entangled with extractivist, exploitative, and toxic logics of technological progress. We decided to take on board the task of addressing such troubled material histories and their afterlives through two workshops focused on plastic and plasticity. Rather than assuming that our relationship with technology is fixed, we took a critical and reflective approach, acknowledging how societal norms and cultural expectations influence our interactions with technology. Combining insights from materials science, neuroplasticity, and feminist science and technology studies, we designed our activities as a reparatory practice. Even though modern technology is often seen as the culprit for non-reversible environmental harm, it is also a powerful tool for ecological and social change.

This was our first time working together as a group, sharing our ideas, experiences, and visions for a feminist technological transformation. We decided to start in the kitchen. The stainless steel industrial space was perfect for our experiment with making eco-glitter while talking about microplastics, pollution, and queer visibility.

noun: plastic

a synthetic material made from a wide range of organic polymers, such as polyethylene, PVC, nylon, etc., that can be moulded into shape while soft and then set into a rigid or slightly elastic form.

adjective: plastic

1. made of plastic; not genuine; artificial or unnatural.
2. (of a substance or material) easily shaped or moulded.
3. offering scope for creativity.

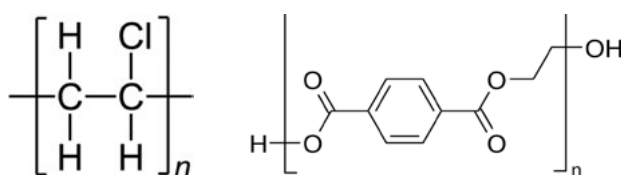
BIOLOGY

exhibiting adaptability to change or variety in the environment.

(in science and technology) relating to the permanent deformation of a solid without fracture by the temporary application of force.

We invited Nicole Seymour, a queer ecologist who researches glitter and reflects on its cultural lives, from an ingredient of beauty cosmetics to the activist tool (glitter bomb!). More recently, glitter was almost cancelled as a microplastic polluting the oceans, seas, and rivers. To make our eco-glitter, we used sugar and salt, which are also entangled in colonial histories of natural resource extraction. This experiment was not about achieving a guilt-free sparkle. It was rather about collectively finding ways to not only survive but also thrive and shine on a damaged planet.

Some participants had not experimented with nonplastic glitter before, while others shared their stories of playing with mica, a naturally shimmery silicate mineral. Shine and brilliance are what define glitter. To imitate the iridescent feathers of birds or exoskeletons of beetles, glitter products use plastics as their base. The first thermoplastics were developed to replace an animal material, ivory from elephant tusks (Szczygielska 2023). Thus, we are reminded that the critical history of technology must include nonhuman animals whose bodies and embodied properties served as models for synthetic materials. Most commercial glitter is polyethylene terephthalate (PET), which was patented in 1941 in England and manufactured as Mylar in the United States and Lasan in the USSR (Seymour 2022). Some glitters can be made of polyvinyl chloride (PVC), a polymer material first synthesised by German chemist Eugen Baumann (1872) and plasticized in the United States in 1926 (Baumann 1872).



The chemical structure of PVC (left) and PET (right).

*I wrenched the nylon curtains back
As far as they would go
And peered through Perspex window panes
At the acrylic road
“Day the World Turned Day-Glo” (X-Ray Spex)*



*It's so very tempting
Will biologists resist?
When he becomes the creator?
Will he let us exist?*
"Genetic Engineering" (X-Ray Spex)

We discussed artificial flowers as part of different cultures, vinyl records, and song lyrics with a strong feeling for materials. Plastics of any kind came around as a strangely natural topic that bonded us. We wanted to consider our personal relation to these ubiquitous materials, transcending them into an exploration of fears, hopes, and memories. We decided to use the forgiving, playful, and critical zine format, which allowed us to create the space for searching the interplay between environmental realities, personal relationships, and social structures. Bakelite objects, a latex corset, temporary polyurethane housing solutions in the aftermath of disasters, our self-made glitter sprinkled on paper, plastic leaves, and celluloid toys – all became the subject of our collective herstory of plasticity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Baumann, Eugen. 1872. "Ueber einige Vinylverbindungen" ("On some vinyl compounds"). *Annalen der Chemie und Pharmacie*, 163: 308–322.
Seymour, Nicole. 2022. *Glitter*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
Szczygielska, Marianna. 2023. "Reading Teeth: Ivory as an Artifact of Classed Whiteness." *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* 53, no. 3: 308–331.

IMAGES

P. 43 AFSAR (Asian Feminist Studio for Art and Research), lecture performance, script by Charmaine Poh, Hanwen Zhang, Park Hye-in, Mooni Perry, Yan Lin, Musquiqui Chihying, You Feng, Eugene Hannah Park, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: Isabelle Schmitz

P. 41 and 46 Baldeep Kaur, Selen Solak, Marianna Szczygielska, Hanwen Zhang: *CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY* Zine Making Workshop, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, p. 41 collage by Maria Dębińska, p. 46 photo collage by Selen Solak



Link to the video from the Glitter Kitchen workshop.

LEAKY CYCLES

Reading Group, COMPOST Zine Lounge

SOIL EATERS. A Geophagy Ritual

INFINITE RETURNS. A Role-playing Activity

India Mansour (biologist, Berlin, Germany/United States)

Gülşah Mursaloğlu (artist, Berlin, Germany/Türkiye)

Cammack Lindsey (artist, musician, Berlin, Germany/United States)

Sybille Neumeyer (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany)

Lena Fließbach (curator, Berlin, Germany)

Cansu Tekin (biologist, Berlin, Germany/Türkiye)



Clay Eating, Earthly Matters: The Reading Session, Compost Zine Lounge, Infinite Returns – A Role-playing Game

India Mansour, Gülşah Mursaloğlu, Cammack Lindsey,
Sybille Neumeyer, Lena Fließbach, Cansu Tekin

*Soil is a testimony that everything on earth is matter made of matter,
that has been matter of something else. As we die, we return to the soil.
We are matter passing, shapeshifting forms through a finite Earth.*
(Maria Puig de la Bellacasa 2021)

Following cycles on all scales through artistic and microbial lenses, *Leaky Cycles* was an invitation to immerse into, ingest, and return to soil and water ecologies and bio-social climates that depend on them. We explored what can be cultured in social and material matters when listening to and learning from a more-than-human perspective.

In the various sessions, we dove into texts on care, microbial agencies, and symbiotic relations, contributed to polyphonic knowledge on leaky cycles in an ongoing zine-making session, and explored rituals, paradigms, and cycles of consumption by tasting clays. At the end of the festival, we performed a game to embody the roles of different organisms to explore cycles of life and death and the soil as a site of both the return and emergence of life.

Clay Eating

Geophagia (earth eating) is an ancient practice that can be traced in multiple communal histories from around the world. However, with the introduction of sanitation practices through modernization, Geophagia has been deemed shameful. Nowadays, the practice is making a comeback through different healing trends, finding its way into homes in attractive bottles. In our session on “Clay Eating,” we explored multiple cycles of consumption by tasting clays in a ritual of care while partaking in a communal discussion about consumption cycles and who controls what we ingest. Convening around platters of edible clay, we discussed the manifold human and non-human agencies entangled in bodily consumption.

Our clay-eating rituals were accompanied by a poem and flowed into our reading session. As we emptied our earth into our bellies

and filled our hearts and minds with a discussion, the participants reached into a “compost” glass jar to pull out quotes to read aloud:

Earthly Matters: The Reading Session

People go to extreme lengths to obtain the earth of their heart's desire.
(Young 2011)

Soil microorganisms strongly influence terrestrial biogeochemistry by forming and decomposing soil organic matter. (Sokol et al. 2022)

Humans eventually become addicted to their Ina's venom and can die if they do not get bitten regularly, an aspect that seems more parasitic than mutual. (Sanchez-Taylor 2017)

The delineation between life and death is complex and debatable.
(Emerson et al. 2017)

In the *Earthly Matters* reading group, we explored social and material matters by listening to and learning from more-than-human perspectives via texts and quotes from various genres. Drawing from the range of research interests in our cluster, we shared excerpts from scientific literature, plays, speculative fiction, and eco-feminism and discussed soils and cycles, from molecular to cultural, bodily to planetary.

The reading group was structured by randomly selecting quotations from a large glass jar surrounded by local soil. The atmosphere was calm, curious, and reflective. Our format meant that no one could anticipate what text would come next, which led to a fascinating weaving of our themes and the synthesis and experiences of the participants.

A vampire's curse-bound needs to rest in its native soil // How different people call the(ir) soil and relate to it // Sense of belonging to the soil and how it shapes who we are //

Selected texts and quotes from the reading group melted into our zine lounge, as bits and pieces of the quotes were composted into original poetry and illustrated by images from the themes presented throughout our *Leaky Cycles* process.

Compost Zine Lounge

The zine workshop was an open platform to (de-/re-)compose texts on cycles of matters, cultures, and knowledge into new textures of collectivity and collective imagination. Drawing from our reading session, longer-form texts, brainstorming, and visioning in our cluster, we shared in-progress texts, images, prompts, and blank spaces that emerged from our discussions. We created a “making space” for expression around soil, climate, and cyclical themes. We compiled the outputs into one or more editions of a *Leaky Cycles* zine. Relaxing, drawing and thinking during the COMPOST zine-making lounge while exploring earthly and leaky more-than-human relationships was a success. These inspiring interactions blended with our collective knowledge and arose from the soil, coming to life in the format of a game activity!

Infinite Returns – A Role-playing Game

Our last activity from our cluster was *Infinite Returns* - a tabletop RPG (Role-playing game) that used worldbuilding to spawn a fictional story that grew as it was played. Based on our collective knowledge, a rulebook for the game was developed that included various agents or characters, ranging from *Daphnia magna* (water flea), frogs, *Vampyrella* (amoeba), green algae and toxic cyanobacteria, human communities (soil eaters and non-soil eaters), and land managers (conservationists or industrial agricultural). An initial story was set - a flood had gushed through the land, and the characters had to interact with one another, using their own skills, special powers, and drawbacks. As the game was played, the story shaped itself through various actions of character transformation and “leak events,” such as over-farming or even the Vampire virus (*Vampyrella* and human symbiosis).

Intellectual Soil-kibbles for Thought

The following quotes are reflections on the experience of working together with our group members, including a scientist working daily in strict laboratory settings with microorganisms, a bio-tech advisor who applies science to real-life scenarios, and interdisciplinary artists and curators dabbling in BioArt and DIY science:

For me, the most important part was how willing the participants were to share their experiences on related topics and how open they were. This is rare in workshop/conference environments, and I think the space fostered by all the participants enabled this. Both in the reading group and the ritual, we reflected on the different bodies' entanglement with soil and the political implications around it: To whom does the soil belong? We talked about ownership in relation to it. Soils' ungraspable complexity was also one of the major topics.

Initially, I was challenged to consider whether I felt it was ethical to eat soil, a non-renewable resource, but felt differently after learning about the historical and cultural context and, indeed, again after eating it myself. Some of the activities, such as the RPG, were liberating and allowed me to re-envision soil organisms outside of strictly measurable bounds: for example, as comedians.

I was fascinated to discover that many MoF festival participants are secret vampire lovers! Throughout our session, the connection of our group to vampirism became more visible from the shadows. Their inseparable connection to soil, buried in the ground in their death, they rise from it in their rebirth with a newfound thirst for human blood. That the soil from their home is something they carry throughout their immortal life, along with their fight to retain their humanity.

During our zine sessions, open sharing and creating together with participants brought many ideas and variations into being. Textual and visual materials were used in unique combinations, and each page had an outstanding message from the makers' perspective. The resulting pages were by themselves a brilliant collection of art and thought pieces stitched together with inspiring interactions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Emerson, Joanne B., Rachel I. Adams, Clarisse M. Betancourt Román, Brandon Brooks, David A. Coil, Katherine Dahlhausen, Holly H. Ganz, et al. 2017. "Schrödinger's microbes: tools for distinguishing the living from the dead in microbial ecosystems." *Microbiome* 5, no. 1 (2017): 1-23.
- Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, Serpentine podcast: Future Ecologies. Episode 5 „FE3.5 – The Story of the Understory of the Understory“ (26.02.2021); 00:56, <https://www.futureecologies.net/listen/fe-3-5-the-story-of-the-understory-of-the-understory>.
- Sanchez-Taylor, Joy. 2017. "Fledgling, Symbiosis, and the Nature/Culture Divide." *Science Fiction Studies* 44, no. 3 (2017): 486-505.

Sokol, Noah W., Eric Slessarev, Gianna L. Marschmann, Alexa Nicolas, Steven J. Blazewicz, Eoin L. Brodie, Mary K. Firestone, et al. 2022. "Life and death in the soil microbiome: how ecological processes influence biogeochemistry." *Nature Reviews Microbiology* 20, no. 7: 415-430.

Young, Sera L. 2011. *Craving earth: understanding pica—the urge to eat clay, starch, ice, and chalk*. Columbia University Press.

IMAGES

Cluster *LEAKY CYCLES* with India Mansour, Gülşah Mursaloğlu, Cammack Lindsey, Sybille Neumeyer, Lena Fließbach, Cansu Tekin, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, with various activities:

P. 49 above *COMPOST Zine Lounge*, workshop, photo: ALB

P. 49 below *SOIL EATERS – A Geophagy Ritual*, 2023, photo: ALB

P. 52 above *Reading Group*, photo: India Mansour

P. 52 below *COMPOST Zine Lounge*, workshop, collage by Julia Degan, photo: Cammack Lindsey

P. 55 *INFINITE RETURNS – A Role-playing Activity*, photo: Lena Fließbach



ALTERNATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Instant Storytelling Sessions

Anne Hölck (scenographer, curator, Berlin, Germany)

Nicola Maria Hochkeppel (cultural producer, healthcare consultant,
Berlin/Cologne, Germany)

Aslı Dinç (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany/Türkiye)

The Fluxonial Shelf

Kristina Stallvik (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany/United States)

Liquifying Language

Annika Haas (media theorist, writer, critic, Berlin, Germany)

MATTERS OF LANGUAGE

WHAT'S IN A NAME
SPACIOUS SINGING
FLESH
PRECEDES) UNDER-
STANDING
RD WITH(OUT)

o need for them.
ed. Yet one can
king—so em-
mmonplace
ishing one
o see

Poetry Is Not a Luxury (1985)
Audre Lorde

The quality of light by which we scrutinize our lives has direct bearing on which we live, and upon the changes which we hope to bring about through within this light that we form those ideas by which we pursue our magic and This is poetry as illumination, for it is through poetry that we give name to are, until the poem, nameless and formless-about to be birthed, but a distillation of experience from which true poetry springs births thought concept, as feeling births idea, as knowledge births (precedes) understanding

"In these violent and lazy times, in which we do not live what we live, we are read, we are forcibly lived, far from our essential lives, we lose the gift we no longer hear what things still want to tell us we translate, we translate, everything is translation and reduction, there is almost nothing left of the sea but a word without water: for we have also translated the words, we have emptied them of their speech, dried, reduced, and they

Instant Storytelling Sessions

Anne Hölck, Nicola Maria Hochkeppel, Aslı Dinç

Having spontaneous discussions was an integral part of the *MATTER OF FLUX* festival planning sessions in the spring of 2023, in which we exchanged ideas about the multiplicity of techniques for understanding, creating, and sharing knowledge in art and science. The atmosphere was always intense, vibrant, and fluid. From one input, a whole interlace of new thoughts and stories emerged. Within a few minutes of exchange, a flow of conceptual and visual associations brought about constant changes of perspective.

The set-up for these instant storytelling sessions offered all participants the opportunity to experience such encounters themselves. A collection of research questions and objects of interest from the MoF network members was available as a starting point for the sessions in intimate rounds of up to five participants. This method could be continuously practised by everyone during the festival. The wide range of objects, from fossil or naturalistic finds to artefacts created from artistic material research and politically charged everyday objects, enabled us as activators to enter associatively into the shared narrative.

The dynamics of the sessions remained flexible and took on astonishingly different formats: A short plant-based brainstorm on a potato called Laura; a lecture performance on a frog heart model from a medical collection; a discursive conversation on intercultural linkages triggered by a dried seahorse from Staten Island Beach; the political power of diving goggles from Istanbul that encouraged action rather than conversation.

Displayed on two tables, the objects and poetically associated or research-linked questions on cards expanded the potential of the oral storytelling format to include a silent one. This silent format sought to enable passing participants to touch them and engage in a very personal story with the individual objects. Throughout the festival, the instant storytelling sessions wove an invisible network between us, the objects, and places and transformed our starting point into a kaleidoscopic change of perspectives.

The Fluxional Shelf

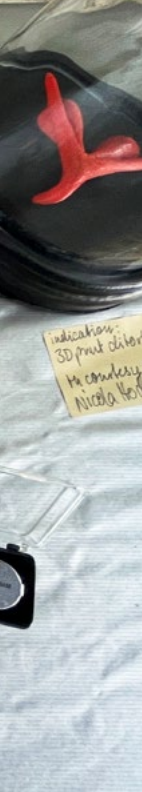
Kristina Stallvik

A consideration of embodied epistemologies is essential to the creation of alternative knowledge.

How do our bodies interact with surrounding architecture? How does the spatial framework of a conference shape what is produced? How are interior arrangements affectively charged?

Throughout history, the bathroom has been known colloquially as the reading room of the home, meant to house the most vulnerable bodily acts and notorious for the consumption of stories and texts. To materially *hack* the conference format, *The Fluxional Shelf* activated the taboo space of the bathroom at PA58 with a fluid reading room. Housed on a bright blue, free-standing pegboard shelf and tucked away from the main conference spaces, the initial library contained texts from the organizing members of the *MATTER OF FLUX* network: An archive of our communal influences. This included works authored by the members themselves and external theorists and scientists, such as Robin Wall-Kimmerer, Donna Haraway, Silvia Federici, and Lynn Margulis.

Conference participants were encouraged to provide additions to the shelves by either bringing their own texts or by using the printer stationed nearby. The printer was also used to scan and photocopy materials the participants wanted to sit with outside of the conference's temporal bounds. An exciting development was the addition of a collective annotation practice. On top of the annotations that already existed on many of the texts from their past lives with previous readers, throughout the weekend, the texts became filled with new doodles, notes, and highlights from conference participants. Each time a text was taken home, it branched off to create new dialogues from the annotations present at the time it was copied. In this way, the shelf was constantly "in flux," providing a nexus for reflection and exchange.



Liquifying Language

Annika Haas

Li

li li lickkk

wi fyingk

Lang ~ w tch

Why liquify language

To a great extent, knowledge is a matter of language. Habitual, disciplinary, and inherited vocabularies shape what we (can get to) know. At the same time, language is constantly in flux. This workshop within the festival cluster *Alternative Knowledge Production* affirmed variable and transitory aspects of language. *Liquifying language* refers to exuding words that we would like to see flowing more widely in this world and engaging with terms requiring transformation differently.

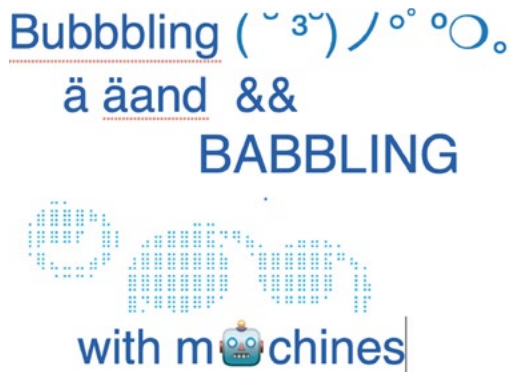
Therefore, we took inspiration from queer-feminist ways of writing *through* the body. After a warm-up, we designed some (soma)tic poetry exercises inspired by CA Conrad. Iterating individual sets of movements before writing meant not only sitting with the words we wanted to liquify (e.g., occult, possibly, identity, binary, matter, romance, dissociation, knowledge production, hesitance) but letting the words travel through our bodies.

Let's mingle around two sources situating language beyond discourse and the human body: "Once the continent wore no names, having no need for them. The languages of water, ice, and wind prevailed," writes Lauret Savoy, reminding us of languages that precede the (oppressive) power of names given to (colonized) lands (Savoy 2015, 71). In a text by Hélène Cixous, we listen to the desire to connect and engage with the languages of waters, as well as with

the juiciness and wetness of words so that “[...] ‘sea,’ ‘sea’ smelled of seaweed, sounded salt, and we tasted the infinite loved one, we licked the stranger, the salt of her word on our lips.” (Cixous 1991, 65)

~

The workshop ended with an experiment to receive some dripping words from natural language processing machines. They were stuttering rather than meandering. However, our slippery understanding of their babbling produced words of mixed waters, such as “*une chemise of anxiety*,” and an affirmative “but what is thrown is yes.”



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cixous, Hélène. 1991. "Clarice Lispector: The Approach. Letting Oneself (Be) Read (by) Clarice Lispector 'The Passion According to C. L.'". In *"Coming to Writing" and Other Essays*, edited by Deborah Jenson, translated by Sarah Cornell and Susan Sellers, 59–77. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Savoy, Lauret E. 2015. *Trace: Memory, History, Race, and the American Landscape*. Berkeley, California: Counterpoint.

IMAGES

- P. 57 Annika Haas: *Liquifying Language*, workshop, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: Stefanie Rau
- P. 60 Anne Hölck, Nicola Maria Hochkeppel, Aslı Dinç: *Instant Storytelling Sessions*, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: Anne Hölck
- P. 61 Kristina Stallvik: *The Fluxional Shelf*, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: ALB

TECHNOLOGIES. SENSORS. INTERFACES.

Octopussyntric. Workshop, Performance

Constanza Piña Pardo (artist, dancer, researcher, Berlin, Germany/Chile)

Flo Razoux (biologist, educator, Berlin, Germany/France)

Nicol Rivera Aro (artist, researcher, dramaturg, Berlin, Germany/Chile)

pamela varela (artist, activist, poet, Berlin, Germany/Mexico)



Octopussyntric. Workshop, Performance

Constanza Piña Pardo, Flo Razoux, Nicol Rivera Aro, pamela varela

Octopussyntric was a theoretical and practical laboratory that took the form of a two-day workshop. The aim was to develop an electronic device that invited the participants to interconnect with each other and expand their sensory capabilities.

The laboratory approach was centred on technofeminism. Each host brought their own perspective and expertise on the topic. On the first day, Flo Razoux presented a queer approach to the biology of sex and illustrated, through human and nonhuman examples, the relevance of decentralising anthropocentric views on sexuality and pleasure. pamela varela gave a performative lecture on her work, introducing the participants to different mythological narratives and opening the collective imagination through an interactive fabulation activity. The first day ended with a group drawing and sharing session of the participants' vision for the co-creation.

On the second day, Nicol Rivera presented her work about different inputs on performative sexo-technological perspectives that generate friction within the erotic human-machine relationship. Constanza Piña introduced the participants to sound and electronic practices with an approach to pleasure. She presented the *Octopussyntric* instrument, a device consisting of touch and light sensors that allow for a human-machine interplay. The participants were later invited to build together a prototype of the device using dough, translating their visions of collective pleasure into imaginary shapes. The second day ended with a sound test.

The workshop concluded with an improvised performance at Panke Club involving the hosts and some participants. Impregnated by all the concepts, narratives, rituals, and cybererotic images presented during the workshop, the performance evoked a sonic orgy: connected through an octopus-shaped pleasure antenna where all bodies progressively merged into one unique agency.

IMAGES

P. 65 and 67 Constanza Piña Pardo, Flo Razoux, Nicol Rivera Aro, pamela varela: *Octopussyntric*, workshop, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: ALB



PLANT ENCOUNTERS. PRACTICES, SITES, COMMU- NICATION

Sites of Vegetal Life. Performative Lectures

Käthe Wenzel (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany)

Susanne Schmitt (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany)

Alice Cannavà (editor/curator, designer/coder, Berlin, Germany/Italy)

Lisa Bell Weisdorf (artist, Berlin, Germany/Canada)

MicrocosMoss. Workshop

Susanne Jaschko (curator, cultural manager, Berlin, Germany)

Jacky Hess (biologist, Berlin, Germany)

Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky (artist, Berlin, Germany/Switzerland)

Lucy Powell (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany/United Kingdom)

Alchemic Cooking

Chiara Garbellotto (anthropologist, Berlin, Germany/Italy)

Sina Ribak (researcher, Berlin, Germany)



Sites of Vegetal Life. Performative Lectures

Käthe Wenzel, Susanne Schmitt, Alice Cannavà, Lisa Bell Weisdorf

In the performative lectures *Sites of Vegetal Life*, four presentations discussed various methods for fostering deep relationships between humans, plants, and their shared biomes.

Käthe Wenzel and Susanne Schmitt combined two approaches they use as tools of encounter: they look at ink making and distillation, which they shared with the participants, as household processes and epistemic practices alike. Plants are chemical beings. They communicate through material change. Wenzel and Schmitt explore the transformation and transmutation that takes place when plants and heat come together. Via a detour through the kitchen/workshop, filled with hot plates, trickling water, steam, and sudden shifts in sound and hue, they created a baroque and theatrical atmosphere. Wenzel works with Colour Topographies, using found colour to arrive at a new understanding of place. Plant dyes - fleeting and unstable - can be re-discovered as performative, metabolic, and site-specific. Plant inks are influenced by climate, environment, and contamination. The knowledge of plants is a knowledge of place. Schmitt works with innocent-looking sweets, haptic encounters, and plant distillations (in collaboration with Katrin Petroschkat). Schmitt's works aim to explore air-bound communication through floating smells and odours, mobilizing rooted beings.

Alice Cannavà and Lisa Bell Weisdorf both aspire to harvest practical and theoretical knowledge from the cultivation of encounters with the city's plant life. Cannavà's research into Berlin's greenery aims to get to know and actively co-exist with its plant and animal inhabitants. She presented colourful images, sounds, and stories from two experiences: gardening in her Prenzlauer Berg backyard over three years and an early-stage exploration of Nasse Dreieck, a wild green area in Pankow. She talked about failed gardening experiments, the challenges of loamy soil, permaculture, historical city planning, urban ecology, and ultimately hanging out with plants. Weisdorf's work concerns the intimacy that can unfold between the self and its surroundings when individual experience reaches towards its material environment. Her presentation addressed the process behind Weinlese, an in-progress art project focused on Weinbergspark. Using the concept of psychogeography

and the practice of the *dérive* as a starting point, she detailed how her peregrinations in the park and her research into its history inspired her to produce wine using fruits collected from the site.

MicrocosMoss. Workshop

Susanne Jaschko, Jacky Hess, Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky, Lucy Powell

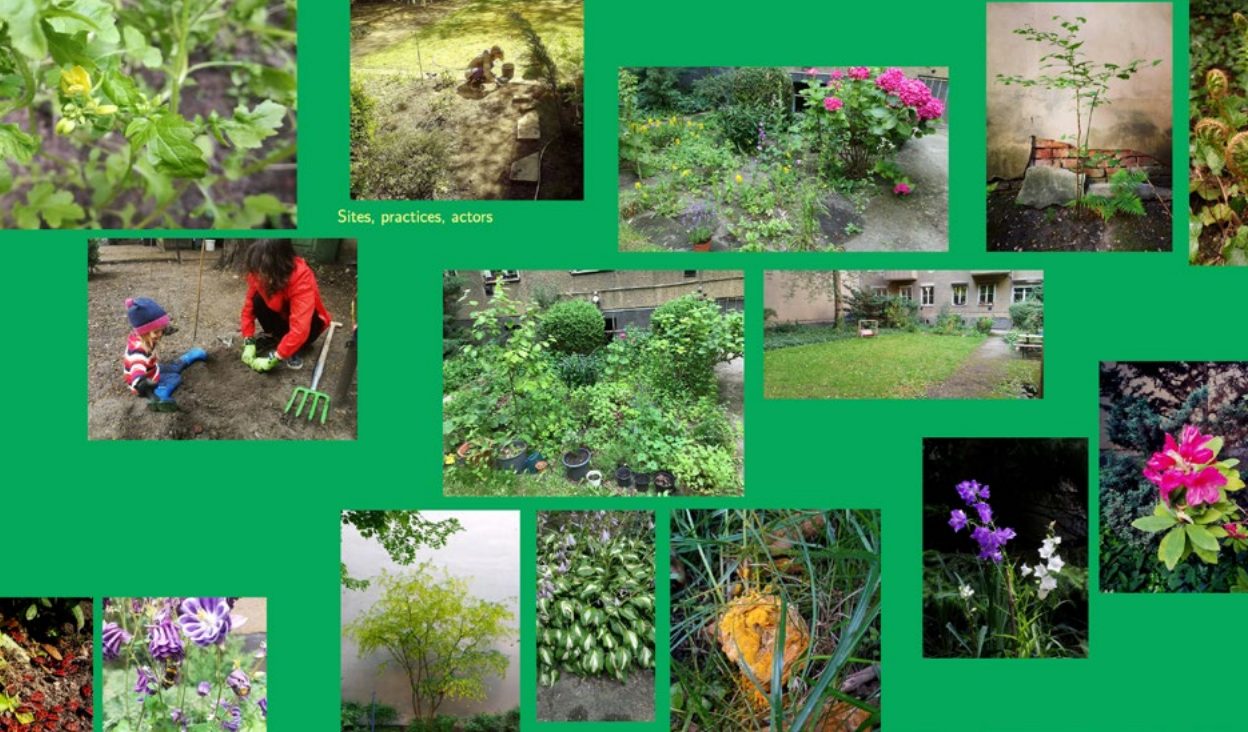
MicrocosMoss is an immersive journey into the world of moss. It was conceived and first realized as a workshop for the *MATTER OF FLUX* festival. The workshop is a joint project by an interdisciplinary team composed of artists Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky and Lucy Powell, biologist Jackie Hess, and curator Susanne Jaschko.

The workshop has emerged from the team's shared fascination for moss and evolved into its current form guided by their different professional backgrounds and practices. Inspired by Robin Wall Kimmerer's poetic and scientific writing about mosses, all four team members were keen to learn more about and from these amphibious and ubiquitous plants. Excited by the possibilities of diving collectively into a vast microcosmos (that comprises some 22,000 species that have been evolving for 450 million years), they designed a workshop that adapts to different environments, collecting and generating more knowledge with each iteration. The workshop is framed as an invitation to spend time with the mosses, becoming intimate with them and their habitats and delving deep into their ways of being.

The workshop features exercises and explorations that focus on different aspects of moss, such as its resilience and adaptability, diminutive size, sexuality, dispersal, affinity with water, and environmental interactions. The workshop is structured into three parts: (1) an exploration into the site-specific habitat of mosses through sensorial immersion, mapping, and drawing; (2) a session on delving into the morphology and biology of mosses through microscopy; and (3) a somatic meditation. Readings from Kimmerer's book *Gathering Moss* are used throughout to weave a narrative thread.

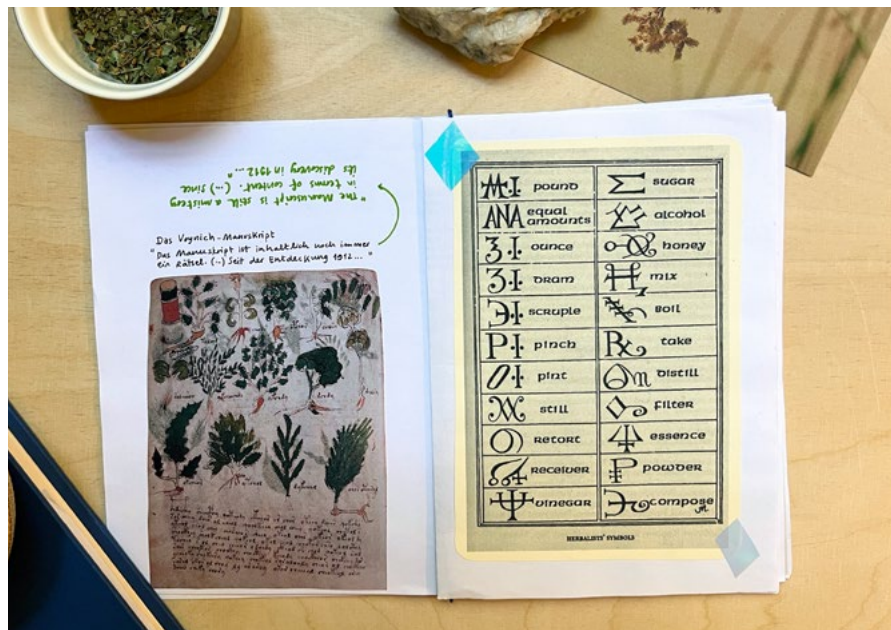
The *MicrocosMoss* workshop is intended to be a learning exercise for the participants, as well as for the host team, who had not collaborated before. A digital zine will be produced to collect the workshop's findings.





Sites, practices, actors





Alchemic Cooking

Chiara Garbellotto, Sina Ribak

Inspired by the herbalist tradition of plant-based alchemy, we explored cooking and gossiping as modes of collective (un)learning. Stepping aside from the dominant lineage of the quest for the Philosopher's Stone based on the extraction of pure elements out of matter, we trusted a more undisciplined and smudged craft. We created a multivocal, sensory, and transgenerational experience to nurture enthusiasm, curiosity, and love for the plants. The encounter and hybridisation with lively plants were our *Materia* to diffract more-than-human worlds and their different representations across disciplinary and professional boundaries. Potatoes and rosemary acted as representative foods for an open archive exploring the pluriverse of knowledges, cosmologies, ecologies, and technologies.

We reclaimed the kitchen venue as a space of care and gossip. Here, the awe for the shape of the potato leaves, the smells, textures, and sounds and the co-existence of human and plant bodies had a galvanising effect. Passing around the rosemary crown during the introduction, chopping together the ingredients, sipping the herbal infusion and munching the potato gratin, we became materially implicated with the plants rather than distancing ourselves from them as an *object of discussion*. Research questions, such as What does rosemary do to your brain?, inspiring historical figures of women scientists, feminist researchers, artists, and writers, and potato beetles are featured in a fanzine. In the safer spaces of the festival kitchen and bar and the context of community building, *Alchemic Cooking* emerged as a participatory rehearsal that we want to reenact in different settings.

IMAGES

P. 69 and 73 below Susanne Jaschko, Jacky Hess, Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky, Lucy Powell: *MicrocosMoss*, workshop, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: ALB, Lucy Powell (73)

P. 72 and 73 Käthe Wenzel, Susanne Schmitt, Alice Cannavà, Lisa Bell Weisdorf: *Sites of Vegetal Life*, performative lectures, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photos: ALB, Alice Cannavà (73 above)

P. 74 Chiara Garbellotto, Sina Ribak: *Alchemic Cooking*, workshop, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photos: ALB, Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky (top), Chiara Garbellotto (bottom)

HYDRO- RELATIONS

Vessels for Water. Workshop

Jemma Woolmore (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany/New Zealand)

Lena Johanna Reisner (curator, writer, Berlin, Germany)

Nayeli Vega (artist, designer, researcher, Berlin, Germany/Mexico)

Sarah Hermanutz (artist, Berlin, Germany/Canada)



Vessels for Water. Workshop

Jemma Woolmore, Lena Johanna Reisner, Nayeli Vega,
Sarah Hermanutz

Vessels for Water picked up on ancient practices of collecting water and transformed them into a ritual for connection. Handmade objects served as containers for water and stories exploring the complex network of more-than-human hydrological relations.

In the months leading to the festival, the working group consisted of three artists and one curator who met for sessions of hand-crafting clay vessels. Working with this playful and tactile material developed a shared space of experimentation and gently connecting conversations. This open, non-hierarchical experience flowed into the workshop, where participants introduced themselves by sharing the name of a body of water that is meaningful to them. They were then each invited to select a handmade vessel for a collective walk along the nearby Panke River.

These vessels were used to gather water from the river, carefully carry it back to the festival venue, and ritually pour it into a communal glass vessel, where it joined with water collected from other sources. The mindfulness of handling these variably delicate objects was intended to foster sensitivity and create a safe space of intimacy for sharing personal experiences with water.

Conversations began during the meditative hours spent creating the vessels, and they were continued throughout the workshop as the group reflected on mutual relationships of care and containment, interdependence, and the watery embodiments of mothering both human and non-human lives.

While sitting together alongside the riverbank and then around the central glass vessel in the festival venue, participants communed in a collective poetry reading and closing guided meditation, which sought to anchor them in tranquillity and connection with the continuum of external and internal waters.

As a relational experience, the workshop used artistic and performative methods to build watery intimacies. As symbols and agents of this experience, the vessels were gifted to the participants to carry these connections onward beyond the festival.



IMAGES

P. 77 and 79 Jemma Woolmore, Lena Johanna Reisner, Nayeli Vega, Sarah Hermannutz: *Vessels for Water*, workshop, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: ALB



CONJURING STENCH

Smell Workshop

Lyndsey Walsh (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany/United States)

Alanna Lynch (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany/Canada)



Conjuring Stench. Smell Workshop

Lyndsey Walsh, Alanna Lynch

Conjuring Stench was inspired by Canidia, Rome's first witch and poet Horace's antimuse. Vilified and referred to as an oversexed hag, Horace created Canidia as a character that solely exists to cause Horace misfortune (Paule 2017; Ager 2021). Her character as a witch is said to be inspired by a perfume maker, a profession historically associated with magic (Paule 2017). Horace's framing of Canidia as an evil witch also follows a legacy of othering practices against women and other minorities through associations with witchcraft (Kgatla 2020).

During the workshop, we set out to examine what makes things stinky and why we perceive them as smelling bad by looking at the social and cultural aspects surrounding smell. What smells 'bad' is subjective, caused by our perception of a smell rather than any physical qualities of the smell itself (Haviland-Jones et al. 2016). As with Canidia, the supposed smell of the 'other' threatens the established order and is used as an excuse to exclude and create boundaries (Classen 1992, 135; Classen et al. 1994, 169). However, there is great potential in using smell for subversion and resistance. An example is the use of stink bombs to disrupt and take up space. Another is how enslaved people used smell as a mode of resistance (Kettler 2020). On the other side, nefarious stink bombs, such as Skunk water employed by the Israeli Defense Forces for crowd control, are often marketed as harmless and humane when, in reality, they inflict real psychological damage (Hsu 2020).

We demonstrated a series of smell extraction and generation methods for participants to employ, including infusion, fermentation, steam distillation, burning, and grinding. From these extractions, we created a collective scent combining the items brought by participants, such as a worn sock, stinky cheese, the contents of an ashtray, and Red Bull. Most participants found the resulting smell unpleasant, while a few enjoyed it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ager, Britta. 2021. "Smells like Witch Spirit: How the Ancient World's Scented Sorceresses Influence Ideas about Magic Today." *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/smells-like-witch-spirit-how-the-ancient-worlds-scented-sorceresses-influence-ideas-about-magic-today-169066>.

- Classen, Constance. 1992. "The Odor of the Other: Olfactory Symbolism and Cultural Categories". *Ethos*, 20: 133-166. doi:10.1525/eth.1992.20.2.02a00010.
- Classen, Constance, David Howes, and Anthony Synnott. 1994. *Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell*. London: Routledge.
- Haviland-Jones, Jeannette M., Patricia Wilson, and Robin Freyberg. 2016. "Olfaction: Explicit and Implicit Emotional Processing". In Lisa Feldman Barrett, Michael Lewis, and Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones (Eds). *Handbook of Emotions*, Fourth Edition (199-214). London: Guilford Press.
- Hsu, Hsuan. 2020. *The Smell of Risk: Atmospheric Disparities and the Olfactory Arts*. New York: NYU Press.
- Kettler, Andrew. 2020. *The Smell of Slavery: Olfactory Racism and the Atlantic World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kgatla, Thias. 2020. "Addicts of Gender-Based Violence: Patriarchy as the Seed-Bed of Gendered Witchcraft Accusations." *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 46, 3. <https://doi.org/10.25159/2412-4265/7729>.
- Paule, Maxwell Teitel. 2017. *Canidia, Rome's First Witch*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

IMAGES

P. 81 and 83 Lyndsey Walsh, Alanna Lynch: *Conjuring Stench. SMELL workshop*, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: ALB



VISITS

Fluid, Leaky Art Practices – A Studio Visit

Margherita Pevere (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany/Italy)

Theresa Schubert (artist, researcher, Berlin, Germany)

Artist Studio Visit

Cammack Lindsey (artist, musician, researcher, Berlin, Germany/
United States)

Exhibition Visit – “t-issues of care”

Sybille Neumeyer (artist, curator, researcher, Berlin, Germany)

Lab Visit – Plant Ecologies, FU Berlin

India Mansour (biologist, Berlin, Germany/United States)



Fluid, Leaky Art Practices – A Studio Visit

Margherita Pevere, Theresa Schubert

Art practice with non/living and liminal matter taught us the epistemics of wonder (Pevere et al. 2023).

For our studio visit, we selected materials and artworks from our ongoing practices. We presented them for visitors to watch, touch, and walk around. The most interesting moment during the visit was the exchange with experienced curators and young artists, as it offered diverse entry points into our studio practices. These conversations were accompanied by the bubbling of Theresa's algae bioreactors and the fleshy landscapes of Margherita's studies.

Margherita Pevere and Theresa Schubert are influential voices in the Berlin and international scene and have been sharing a studio since 2018. With distinct aesthetics, their practices respond to the current ethical and cultural challenges posed by the interplay of (bio)technology and ecology. They have collaborated on numerous projects with Art Laboratory Berlin since 2015.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Pevere, M., Theresa Schubert, and Karolina Żyniewicz. 2023. *Membranes Out Of Order*, Berlin: Self-Published, p. 5.

Artist Studio Visit

Cammack Lindsey

During the visit to Cammack Lindsey's studio, we explored different tools, instruments, and techniques used within their multidisciplinary musical art practice that incorporates DIY Bio-Art/hacking techniques with a focus on sound. In an interactive playground, the guests engaged in an open dialogue with the different elements, including but not limited to a cyanobacteria breathing-singing apparatus, singing "bäumchen" ("little tree"), cyanobacteria and algae reactors, string instruments, and unique hydrophones. Inspired by the artist's interest in understanding complex systems, such as how toxic blooms, cyanobacteria, and microalgae impact the working class, we dove into open communal discussions. In this whimsical introduction, we found our-

selves, figuratively speaking, dancing with our ghosts while exploring more intimate and playful relationships with otherness.

Exhibition Visit – “t–issues of care”

Sybille Neumeyer

In modern biomedicine, algorithms are trained for histopathological interpretation of tissues, allowing for diagnosis and comparison of lung infections in human and nonhuman animals. Organoids (micro-organs created from human cell tissue) are cultured to refine, reduce, or replace animal testing – known as “3R” (Russell and Burch 1959). The search for alternatives in experimental medicine constantly shapes ethical questions and, consequently, also, the relationships between human and nonhuman lifeforms.

In her collaboration with researchers from Charité 3R, Sybille Neumeyer examined the coevolution between ethics and research as well as between lab practices and modern culture.

She further pondered how artificial organs can invite new imaginaries, such as acknowledging a cellular kinship – the existence within a planetary multi-species community evolving from cells – or imagining alternate, relational, bio-socio-cultural conceptions of health. Inspired by science and science fiction, through a non-linear composition of narratives, the artist set her project around a fictional cultural institute of 3R, investigating the three R’s of our cultural tissues – “Relationality, Reciprocity, Responsibility.”

Within a mutating and dialogical installation, along with ceramics and video, she facilitated a collective mapping of questions, memories, and imaginations for a “universal right to breathe” (Mbembe 2021).

(In collaboration with Charité 3R and Team Andreas Hocke)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Russell, William M.S. and Rex L. Burch. 1959. *The Principles of Humane Experimental Technique*, Methuen, London.

Mbembe, Achille (transl. Carolyn Shread). 2021. “The universal right to breathe.” *Critical Inquiry* 47, no. S2: S58-S62.



Lab Visit – Plant Ecologies, FU Berlin

India Mansour

During the AG Rillig Plant, Fungal, and Soil Ecology laboratory tour, we learned about different experimental methods used in global change ecology research. Global change ecology investigates how organisms and ecosystems are impacted by human activities, such as climate change and the use of synthetic chemicals. During the lab visit, we saw an experiment testing how soil organisms respond to sound pollution, like tractor noises. We then worked hands-on with microplastic-contaminated soils and methods for separating and identifying different microplastics. In addition to these controlled laboratory settings, we also visited a long-term field experiment where multiple co-occurring global change factors, like pesticides, drought, and microplastics, are applied - emulating the current reality for most soil ecosystems.

IMAGES

P. 85 Margherita Pevere, Theresa Schubert: *Fluid Art Practices*, artist studio visit, Margherita Pevere speaking, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: Jessica Ullrich

P. 88 above Sybille Neumeyer: *t-issues of care*, exhibition visit, Charité, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: Jessica Ullrich

P. 88 left below India Mansour: *Lab Visit*, at Plant Ecologies, Institute of Biology, Freie Universität Berlin, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: Jessica Ullrich

P. 88 right below Cammack Lindsey, artist studio visit, festival *MATTER OF FLUX*, Art Laboratory Berlin, 2023, photo: Jessica Ullrich

BIOGRAPHIES

Alanna Lynch is an artist and researcher with a background in biology, psychology, and information studies. She works with living entities, organic materials, smell, and performance. She was a founding member of the artist collective Scent Club Berlin, and her work has been supported by grants from Germany, Canada, and Sweden. In 2018, she was awarded the Berlin Art Prize. // SMELL WORKSHOP

Alice Cannavà is an independent editor/curator and freelance designer/coder. She studied visual arts in Milan and Vienna and currently attends courses in the history of science and technology at the TU Berlin. She edits and publishes *Occulto* - an independent magazine that brings together sciences, humanities, and the arts - with an evolving group of contributors and editors. She curates music, art, and discourse events in several Berlin 'Freie Szene' venues. // CLUSTER: PLANT ENCOUNTERS

Anne Hölck has been a scenographer since 2002 for theatre projects in Germany, France, and Switzerland. She is a board member of the Meinblau project space in Berlin and is responsible for the realisation and coordination of art exhibitions with a team of artists. Since 2014, she has realised curatorial concepts and artistic and scenographic works for collaborative exhibition projects in the artistic research field of human-animal studies. // CLUSTER: ALTERNATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Annika Haas is a media theorist, writer, and critic based in Berlin. Until 2023, she was an assistant professor for visual culture at the Berlin University of the Arts, where she completed her PhD on Hélène Cixous' philosophy and writing through the body. // CLUSTER: ALTERNATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Asian Feminist Studio for Art and Research (AFSAR) bridges contemporary art, academia, and activism through Asian feminist perspectives. Highlighting both local and diasporic contexts, AFSAR fosters dialogues with diverse partners. They archive contemporary feminist discourse and art research, using their online platform to unite multidisciplinary practitioners, promoting collective research and sustainable interactions. // CLUSTER: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

Aslı Dinç is a multidisciplinary artist and researcher. Her works focus on the production of speculations, loops, installations, and performances, with particular emphasis on dystopian narratives, tech capitalism, and human-non-human-machine interactions. Her works have been featured, among others, in UdK, Berlin (2022); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2022); and VECTOR FESTIVAL: Network Dependencies, Toronto (2021). // CLUSTER: ALTERNATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Baldeep Kaur is a doctoral candidate in the DFG-funded RTG Minor Cosmopolitanisms at the University of Potsdam. They study the repair and maintenance of colonialism during phases of large-scale transitions. Alongside their thesis, one of their longer-term projects sets out to imagine velocities of academic work that nourish slow work and protect slow workers. // CLUSTER: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

Cammack Lindsey composes political holobiotical musicals that investigate scientific and historical relics of failures from extractive capitalism to piece together complex networks of oppression to embody stories of collective resistance. Using storytelling as a tool to redistribute stolen futures through performances and installations, they often collaborate with non/toxic cyanobacteria and microalgae. // CLUSTER: LEAKY CYCLES

Cansu Tekin is a biotechnology advisor, scientist, and an enthusiast for biological applications. She has completed her studies at Bilkent University (BSc) and the University of Amsterdam (MSc and PhD). She is currently working as a project head in a non-profit synthetic biology foundation, where she works on bioeconomy, biosafety, and bioremediation practices. // CLUSTER: LEAKY CYCLES

Charmaine Poh is an artist based in Berlin and Singapore working across media, moving images, and performance to peel apart, interrogate, and hold ideas about agency, repair, and the body across worlds. Her current focus, THE YOUNG BODY UNIVERSE, is a series of enactments considering the potentialities of the feminist techno-body. Her work centres the affects of vulnerability, desire, and intimacy from the vantage point of subversion. // CLUSTER: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

Chiara Garbellotto is an anthropologist and designer of (un)learning and (re)mediation formats through creative and playful practices. Her central interests are the hybridization of scientific epistemologies and ontologies and the participatory and multivocal counter-representation and appropriation of urban space. She is part of Fictopus, a collective working with non-linear storytelling and more-than-human worlding. // CLUSTER: PLANT ENCOUNTERS

Christian de Lutz is a curator, originally from New York. As co-founder and co-director of Art Laboratory Berlin, he has curated over 50 exhibitions and many talks, workshops, and seminars. His curatorial work focuses on the interface of art, science, and technology in the 21st century, with special attention given to BioArt, DIY Science initiatives, and facilitating collaborations between artists and scientists. // ART LABORATORY BERLIN TEAM

Constanza Piña Pardo, in her artistic research, explores noise as a sound, social, cultural, political, and spiritual phenomenon. Her work combines electronic experimentation, open-source hardware, ancestral technologies, DIY philosophy, and technofeminist social practices. Her work embodies the idea of electronic witchcraft, seeing electronics as a bridge to connect our bodies with multiple spectral fields. // CLUSTER: TECHNOLOGIES. SENSORS. INTERFACES

Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky (she/her) (CH / SK) is an artist based in Berlin. She grew up in nature with the forest and its inhabitants as her kin. Using cultural, scientific, and personal stories, she works with plant specimens, experimenting with analogue photography. Her artist book *Feeding on Light* was published by ROMA/NL this summer. Since 2017, she has run *Between Us and Nature – A Reading Club* together with Sina Ribak. // CLUSTER: PLANT ENCOUNTERS

Ewen Chardonnet (FR) is an artist, journalist, and curator. In his work, he is interested in practices and speculations connecting artistic research to scientific knowledge to foster shifts of perspectives in society. In 2015, he initiated the art/science platform Roscosmoe.org, supporting artistic works related to the marine environment and evolutionary biology. Ewen is the chief editor of Makery.info. // EXHIBITION

Flo Razoux (they/them) is a queer biologist, creator, and educator with a PhD in neurosciences and biomedical engineering. Flo likes to explore emotions, perception, identity, and the interconnections between the body and the mind. Their work bridges science, activism, performance, transmedia, design, and technology and has been presented in Europe and various Berlin institutions. Flo is the creator of the Lumenses and Zweigeist Berlin projects. // CLUSTER: TECHNOLOGIES. SENSORS. INTERFACES

Gülşah Mursaloğlu completed her BA in Sociology at Boğaziçi University and received her MFA degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In her works, she explores materiality, matter's agency, and human and non-human temporalities. Her research-based installations don't remain stable in form but rather manifest themselves as dynamic and fluid systems through their ephemeral nature. // CLUSTER: LEAKY CYCLES

Hanwen Zhang works interdisciplinary as a curator and artist. Her main focus lies in critical epistemology and methodology of feminist and queer theory. With art-based and performative research methods, her practice encompasses both research and production. She uses a variety of media spanning from text to research, exhibition-making to creating situations, and performative interventions in public spaces. // CLUSTER: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

Dr. India Mansour, postdoctoral scholar and lecturer at the Free University of Berlin, researches how microbial communities shape and are shaped by their environment and their interactions. During her PhD, she investigated soil and river microbial ecology and currently focuses on self-sustaining communities using microbial biospherics. India is a member of DIY Hack the Panke, an interdisciplinary artistic research group. // CLUSTER: LEAKY CYCLES

Jacky Hess is a Berlin-based evolutionary biologist and enthusiast of all things small and ephemeral. She has researched the origins of symbioses of fungi and plants and the evolutionary ecology of wood decomposer fungi, and she now works in synthetic biology. She has also contributed to research in the social sciences, using the perspective of the non-human other as a starting

point for developing more equitable ways to co-exist as humans with our environment. // CLUSTER: PLANT ENCOUNTERS

Jemma Woolmore (she/her) is a media artist whose work explores the spatial and emotional possibilities of light, sound, and image in immersive and performative environments. Increasingly collaborative, her practice blurs the boundaries between real and virtual, intertwining ritual, workshop, VR, and digital world-building as processes to examine relations with bodies of water and local environments. // CLUSTER: HYDRO RELATIONS

Käthe Wenzel is an artist and researcher working with hybrid bodies, queer ecologies, and the structures of urban consumption. She provides machines and survival kits for the navigation of hegemonic culture and explores the knowledge of plants. Wenzel is a professor of aesthetic practice at the European University Flensburg, and she was a Fulbright Exchange Scholar in New York and a Senior Fellow at IFK/Vienna. // CLUSTER: PLANT ENCOUNTERS

Dr. Karolina Żyniewicz is an artist&researcher&educator, a liminal being, existing and performing between various contexts and disciplines. She is a graduate of the Faculty of Visual Arts of the Strzemiński Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź, and she holds PhD in cultural sciences (title obtained at the Faculty of Artes Liberales of the University of Warsaw). Currently, she lives and works in Berlin. // ART LABORATORY BERLIN TEAM

Kristina Stallvik (b. 1999, NYC) is an artist/researcher working with a transdisciplinary approach to queer ecology and interspecies relationships. Stallvik has exhibited at Magma Maria (DE), Automat Collective (US), and The Living Art Museum (IS), among others, and is currently a Chancellor Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. // CLUSTER: ALTERNATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Lena Fließbach (she/her) is an independent curator, writer, and mentor for sustainability in the cultural sector. She develops exhibition concepts and interdisciplinary communication programmes, such as the project *Zero Waste* at the Museum of Fine Arts Leipzig (2020, together with Hannah Beck-Mannagetta). In 2022, she was co-curating

the discourse series "Zero Waste - Art and Knowledge" for Urania Berlin. // CLUSTER: LEAKY CYCLES

Lena Johanna Reisner (she/her) is an interdependent curator and writer. Her research centres around matters of ecology and natureculture, the social structures that drive climate change, ecosystem degradation, and biodiversity loss, as well as environmental and climate justice as countermovements to these crises. // CLUSTER: HYDRO RELATIONS

Lisa Bell Weisdorf is an interdisciplinary artist. Her conceptual and research-driven practice is informed by her educational background studying media theory, as well as her professional experience working as an archival producer for documentary cinema. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in modern culture and media from Brown University and a Master of Fine Arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art. // CLUSTER: PLANT ENCOUNTERS

Lucy Powell is a UK artist based in Berlin whose research-based practice is part of a wider ontological inquiry into more-than-human nature and how to be in the world today. Choosing to work outdoors and collaboratively where possible, she creates walks, workshops, maps, audio works, participatory performances, and books. At the end of 2022, she started the project space HILDEGARD for transformative practices in a large wild garden on the outskirts of Berlin. // CLUSTER: PLANT ENCOUNTERS

Lyndsey Walsh is a US artist, writer, and researcher based in Berlin. Lyndsey's practice explores the ruptures created by technology in the corporality of culture. Currently, Lyndsey is the first and only residing artist in the Department of Experimental Biophysics at Humboldt Universität zu Berlin. They have been featured in Frieze Art Week New York, Humboldt Forum, Ural Biennial, Berlin Biennale, Athens Digital Arts Festival, and Transmediale/CTM. // EXHIBITION // SMELL WORKSHOP

Dr. Margherita Pevere (IT/DE) is an internationally acknowledged artist and researcher working across visual arts and performance with a distinctive visceral signature. Her inquiry hybridizes ecology, biotechnology, and queer and death studies to create artworks that trail today's ecological complexity. She co-founded the performance group Fronte Vacuo. // ARTIST STUDIO VISIT

Marianna Szczygielska is a feminist historian of science. She brings queer and decolonial approaches into reflection on human-animal relations. Her research interests include environmental history, queer ecologies, and science and technology studies. She is an associate editor of the *Humanimalia* journal. She currently works at the Czech Academy of Sciences and teaches at Bard College Berlin. // CLUSTER: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

Mooni Perry is a visual artist based in Berlin and Seoul. In the past few years, she has been exploring the idea of “double-fallen” beings, individuals who do not belong to either A or B. In her recent artistic endeavours, she uses video as her medium and draws on research to create narratives that are intricately woven together in both vertical and horizontal planes. // CLUSTER: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

Moonwen is an artist duo whose practice lies in artistic research. With a specific focus on feminist decolonial theories, Moonwen engages her practice in the discourse of critical reflection on the process of modernisation in Asia, ecology, and the inter-dependence between humans and nonhumans. Since 2020, they have been running the platform Asian Feminist Studio for Art and Research (AFSAR). // CLUSTER: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

Nayeli Vega (MX) is an artist and researcher. In her practice, she interweaves her interests in open-source technologies, textile techniques, ecology, intersectional feminism, and digital world-building. Her artistic research in the digital field is supported by the BCP (Berlinerchancegleichheitprogramm 2023-2026) and the Weißensee Kunsthochschule Berlin (KHB). // CLUSTER: HYDRO RELATIONS

Nicol Rivera Aro, she/her (Chile) Performance Artist, Dramaturg, and Researcher. She is an actress with a speciality in playwriting (Universidad de Valparaíso, 2015). She is a PhD candidate in philology at Leipzig University. Her works focus on the relationship between the body and technological interfaces, delving into gender discourse and post-porn, with special attention given to sextechnologies. // CLUSTER: TECHNOLOGIES. SENSORS. INTERFACES

Nicola Maria Hochkeppel studied film, literature, and cultural communication. She has organised various series of cultural events focusing on contemporary history and art education. She currently does public relations in the creative industries. Since 2020, she has been training as a healthcare consultant and therapist focusing on female health, couples, and sex therapy. She lives and works in Berlin. // CLUSTER: ALTERNATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

pamela varela, she/her (EU/LATAM) is an activist working within the fields of transmedia, technofeminism, and performance. She uses technology to explore the relation of the body with physical/virtual/spiritual spaces, materials, and entities through poetic/political forms of movement, language, sexuality, and mysticism. pam is a member of the collective sWitches. // CLUSTER: TECHNOLOGIES. SENSORS. INTERFACES

Park Hye-in, a curator and researcher, is dedicated to dissecting manifestations and discussions prevalent in East Asian contemporary art, influenced by technological, social, and political contexts. Her research aims to challenge and deconstruct traditional perceptions about culture and art. Hye-in has refined her research focus through her involvement in various curatorial programmes and projects, including Research Studio TPEAA (Trans-cultural Practices in East Asian Art) and filmmaking initiatives. // CLUSTER: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

Regine Rapp is an art historian, curator, and co-director of Art Laboratory Berlin. She researches, curates, teaches, and publishes on 21st-century art at the interface of science and technology, with her latest research project titled Hybrid Art Histories. From March 2024 onward, she is a Guest Professor for Arts & Science at the Art Academy Münster. She has conceived several international conferences, e.g., *Synaesthesia, Discussing a Phenomenon in the Arts, Humanities, and (Neuro)Science* (2013), *Nonhuman Agents* (2017), or *Under the Viral Shadow* (2021). // ART LABORATORY BERLIN TEAM

Sarah Hermanutz (she/her) is a Canada-born, Berlin-based visual artist working at the intersections of performance, technology, and ecology. Her solo and collaborative sculptures, installations, and performance experiments are preoccupied with water, mud,

wetlands, and amphibious life and are concerned with issues of neurodiversity, social cognition, awkward embodiments, and human/nonhuman ecologies. // CLUSTER: HYDRO RELATIONS

Selen Solak is an artist trained in painting and works as a researcher in the physical sciences. In her scientific research, she studies printed energy devices and looks at scientific work to understand the contemporary politics of technology. As an artist, she concentrates on the possibilities of critical approaches to understanding and using images. She explores the ideas through installations, photographs, videos, and self-published zines. // CLUSTER: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

Shu Lea Cheang is an artist and filmmaker who engages in genre-bending gender-hacking art practices. She is celebrated as a net art pioneer with **BRANDON** (1998-1999), commissioned by the Guggenheim Museum, New York. Cheang represented Taiwan with 3x3x6, a mixed media installation at the Venice Biennale 2019. She is currently touring her fourth feature film *UKI* (2023), a Sci-Fi Viral Alt-reality cinema. // EXHIBITION

Sina Ribak is a researcher exploring the bioeconomy, land use, soil, biodiversity, and solidarity from a more-than-human and naturecultures perspective. She co-creates formats for encounters, such as the *Between Us and Nature – A Reading Club*. To her, social and ecological justice means being involved in a solidarity-based agriculture community and in translocal ecosystems aimed at collaboratively shifting paradigms. // CLUSTER: PLANT ENCOUNTERS

Dr. Susanne Jaschko is an art historian, curator, lecturer, and cultural manager. In her curatorial practice, she focuses on the intersection of contemporary art, technology, and science. With her label *prozessagenten*, she explores new ways of collaborative learning through co-creation and interdisciplinarity, together with designers, artists, and other experts. // CLUSTER: PLANT ENCOUNTERS. PRACTICES, SITES, COMMUNICATION

Dr. Susanne Schmitt is a creative anthropologist. Her works include choreographic audio walks for Natural History Museums across the globe ("How to Not be A Stuffed Animal. Moving Museums of Natural History through Multispecies Choreography", funded by

Volkswagen Stiftung, with Laurie Young) and broken cocktails for broken worlds ("Barfly, Danish National Gallery and other sites, with Kat Petroschkat). She is a fellow at RIFS Potsdam. // CLUSTER: PLANT ENCOUNTERS

Sybille Neumeyer is an interdependent artist, researcher and curator with a focus on environmental issues and ecological relationships. Her work is based on post-disciplinary research and collaboration. Through polyphonic (hi)storytelling, installations, walks, performative lectures, and video essays, she examines terrestrial communities, planetary metabolisms, and more-than-human atmospheres. // CLUSTER: LEAKY CYCLES

Dr. Theresa Schubert (DE) received her PhD in media art from Bauhaus University in Weimar, Germany. In an aesthetic between alchemy and futurism, Theresa Schubert's internationally acclaimed works question anthropocentrism and its limits. She creates techno-organic installations and also argues for animal ethics and trans-species encounters. // ARTIST STUDIO VISIT

Tuçe Erel is a Berlin-based curator, art writer, and cultural manager. Erel uses her sociology education in her curatorial research to twist and challenge conventional social science methodologies. She explores the concept of hacking as a way to unbox bio-politics, the Anthropocene, ecological crisis, naturecultures, posthumanism, post-digital theories, artistic speculation, and imagination. // ART LABORATORY BERLIN TEAM

WhiteFeather Hunter is an internationally recognized Canadian artist and scholar, completing a PhD in biological art at The University of Western Australia. She intersects technofeminism, witchcraft, and biology with performance, new media, and craft. Her research into menstrual serum for tissue engineering was spotlighted by Sigma-Millipore for International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2021. // EXHIBITION

Yan Lin is a writer and translator based in Berlin. Her latest translation work is the Chinese translation of the anthology *Realismus Jetzt: Spekulative Philosophie und Metaphysik für das 21. Jahrhundert*, which will be published in 2024. As a writer, she is interested in alternative logic of sensing and engendering. // CLUSTER: CRITICAL HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

CREDITS | MATTER OF FLUX

EXHIBITION, NETWORK, FESTIVAL

EXHIBITION

WhiteFeather Hunter

Lyndsey Walsh

Shu Lea Cheang and Ewen Chardronnet

RUNNING TIME

27 May - 9 July 2023

CURATORIAL TEAM

Regine Rapp, Tuçe Erel, Christian de Lutz

With the kind support of the ALB team, Karolina Żyniewicz, Nina Maria Szukała, Ina Mirzac, and Giada Sarmenti

COOPERATION PARTNERS

Experimentelle Biophysik, HU Berlin

Deutsches Zentrum für Neurodegenerative

Erkrankungen (DZNE), Berlin

SymbioticA, University of Western Australia, Perth

Antre-Peaux, UrsuLaB, Bourges

ART2M, Paris

Makery, Lobomedia

Bioart Society, Helsinki

PHOTOGRAPHY

Tim Deussen



NETWORK, FESTIVAL

For the full list of participants, refer to this book's table of contents.

RUNNING TIME

NETWORK: Started in the winter of 2023, currently running

FESTIVAL: 15 – 18 June 2023

CURATORIAL TEAM

Regine Rapp, Tuçe Erel, Karolina Żyniewicz

With the kind support of the ALB team, Christian de Lutz, Mariia Hermann, Nina Maria Szukała, Ina Mirzac, Hanne Pasdzior, and Julia Degan

COOPERATION PARTNERS

FEMeeting, Portugal

Plant Ecologies | Rillig Lab, FU Berlin

PA58, Berlin

Panke Club, Berlin

POSTER AND TEASER IMAGE

formphase.design

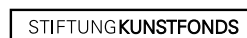
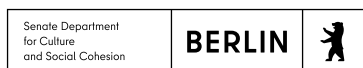
PHOTOGRAPHY

Karolina Żyniewicz, Ina Mirzac



MEDIA PARTNERS: CLOT Magazine and art-in-berlin

The research project *MATTER OF FLUX* with group exhibition, network, and festival was kindly supported by



IMPRINT

Published by Art Laboratory Berlin, 2024

This publication – except for quotes, images and where otherwise noted – is licensed under the Creative Commons Licence CC BY 4.0.
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the internet at <https://dnb.dnb.de>.

Edited by **Regine Rapp**

Book design and production: **Alice Cannavà**

Copy editing and proofreading: **Lyndsey Walsh**

With support by **Christian de Lutz, Tuçe Erel, Karolina Żyniewicz**

Print: Gutenberg Beuys Feindruckerei, Langenhagen

ISBN 978-3-00-078191-9 (print)

ISBN 978-3-00-078192-6 (e-book)

This publication is also available in digital format via ALB's web archive: www.artlaboratory-berlin.org.

This publication was kindly supported by



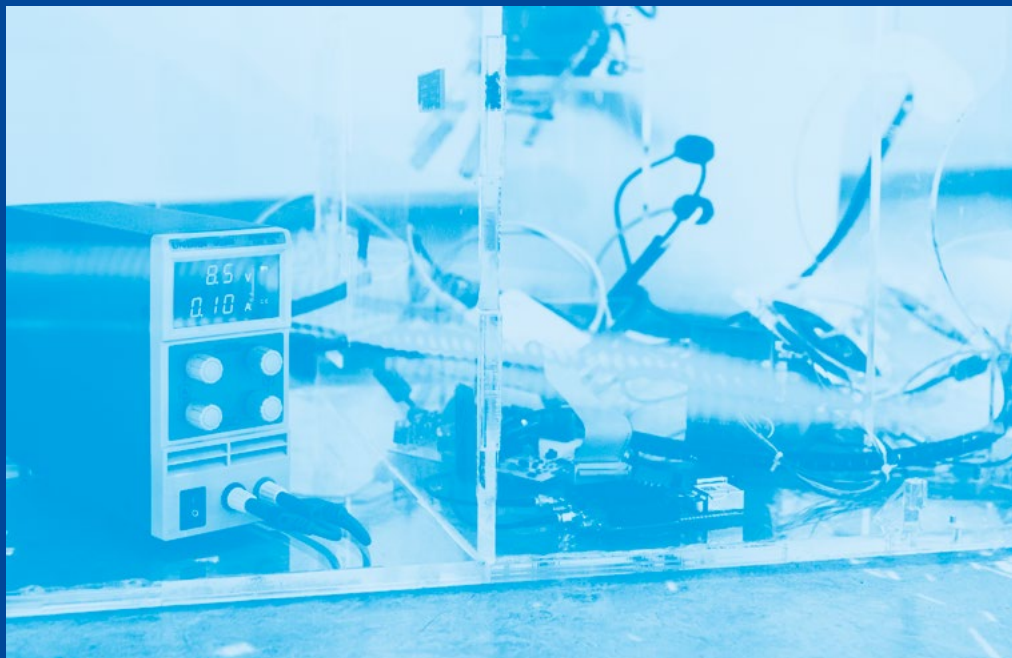
**ART
LABORATORY
BERLIN**

Postal address: Art Laboratory Berlin, Office/ Rapp, Nostitzstr. 12, 10961 Berlin

Exhibition and event venue: Art Laboratory Berlin, Prinzenallee 34, 13359 Berlin

E-Mail: info@artlaboratory-berlin.org | www.artlaboratory-berlin.org





The multiple award-winning art and research platform Art Laboratory Berlin (ALB) presents and discusses art at the interface of science and technology. Co-founded and co-directed by Regine Rapp and Christian de Lutz, ALB places a special emphasis on multidisciplinary artistic research and hybrid art. Key fields are the aesthetics of care, post-anthropocentrism, and art and biotechnology. Over the last ten years, ALB has conceived, realised, and published numerous research projects on art in connection to neuroscience, the life sciences, and artificial intelligence. Selected projects and publications are *[macro]biologies & [micro]biologies. Art and the Biological Sublime in the 21st Century* (2015), *Nonhuman Agents* (2018), *Mind the Fungi* (2020), and *Under the Viral Shadow. Networks in the Age of Technoscience and Infection* (2021). ALB has been internationally approached by artists and academic institutions for collaboration, and it continues to be appreciated for its innovative research concepts and non-hierarchical and consistently interdisciplinary work forms. *MATTER OF FLUX* has proven, once again, that in our current complex times filled with political and ecological crises, it is urgent to find non-linear ways of knowledge production and engage with transcultural practices.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY

Alanna Lynch · Alice Cannavà · Anne Hölck · Annika Haas · Asian Feminist Studio for Art and Research (AFSAR) · Aslı Dinç · Baldeep Kaur · Cammack Lindsey · Cansu Tekin · Charmaine Poh · Chiara Garbellotto · Christian de Lutz · Constanza Piña Pardo · Eva-Fiore Kovacovsky · Ewen Chardronnet · Flo Razoux · Gülşah Mursaloğlu · Hanwen Zhang · India Mansour · Jacky Hess · Jemma Woolmore · Käthe Wenzel · Karolina Żyniewicz · Kristina Stallvik · Lena Fließbach · Lena Johanna Reisner · Lisa Bell Weisdorf · Lucy Powell · Lyndsey Walsh · Margherita Pevere · Marianna Szczygielska · Mooni Perry · Moonwen · Nayeli Vega · Nicol Rivera Aro · Nicola Maria Hochkeppel · pamela varela · Park Hye-in · Regine Rapp · Sarah Hermanutz · Selen Solak · Shu Lea Cheang · Sina Ribak · Susanne Jaschko · Susanne Schmitt · Sybille Neumeyer · Theresa Schubert · Tuçe Erel · WhiteFeather Hunter · Yan Lin.