

### ***Thulu thu thu - before the sun harms you***

#### ***Sonic and haptic forms of solidarity in environmental spectralities***

*knowbotiq in collaboration with Sadie Young/Time Span Arts Center, Pablo Alarcón, Lamin Fofana, Fundacion Mareia, Ayesha Hameed/Elvin Brandhi, Ashanti Harris, Margarida Mendes, Pedro Neves Marquez/Raw Forest, Odete, Romy Rügger, Ira Wilhelm*



*The peat bogs in the Scottish Highlands are a critical zone of capitalist modernism which have memorialized the 'developmental' logic of colonialism and are perpetuating its language of growth, extraction, exploitation and profit accumulation. During the "Highland Clearances" in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries feudal landlords, enriched from their profits on colonial plantations, forced crofters off their land.*

*They moved them to newly built fishing villages on the coast or to the colonies in Guyana, Jamaica, India and Canada. The large moorland areas got drained, afforested and converted into sheep grazing and deer stalking territories.*

*Today a spaceport is being built to launch satellites from North Sutherland; oversized wind farms generate lucrative returns for foreign landowners; the powerful economic body of the white Scottish ancestry industry encourages a cleansing of Scotland's imperial history and mandatory policies sanction forced migration from socially disadvantaged urban areas into the remote Highlands.*

*The performative invocations of Thulu thu thu, before the sun harms you confronted the inadequacy and injustices of an Anthropocene model, which collapses the whole of humanity's environmental interventions into an indivisible, "white" monolith.*

*The artistic interventions traced and unfolded past, present and future entanglements and narratives of materialities in the peat land, its inscribed asymmetric violence and the impacts of racialized capitalism with performative acts of*

- collective sensings - groups of people connected through a multitudinous object of braided plant fibers to apprehend the vibrations of the peatlands
- sonic incantations - a fractured series of sounds, songs and readings articulated from translocal positions, invoking the inhumane politics of the Anthropocene

*The sonic sensings together with a series of lectures formed the field symposium, "Molecular Intimacies", organized by Sadie Young, director of the Timespan Art Center and the art group knowbotiq, held from January 30th to February 2nd, 2020.*

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The following artistic writing is a poetic rendering of a 3 day long collective encounter in the peat bogs. The rhythm of the words in resonance with the embedded sounds of the incantations are reverberations of the experiences and activations in a deep carbon-based techno-ecology, a piece of land cultivated by non-humans.

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### Sensing Molecular Intimacies

Crossing the flow country in the Scottish Highlands,  
a large expanse of blanket bog,  
leaving behind tourist projections,  
ignoring data nature and its myths of the pristine.

Listening and invoking,  
breathing with the bogs -  
what a calming, post-glacial hilly landscape.

Exploring how intensively unspectacular  
other worldings.

Incantation: Inscription, Lamin Fofana



*She jump. Leap from me. Then I decide to count the endless names of stones. Rock leap, wall heart, rip eye, cease breadth, marl cut, blood leap, clay deep, coal dead, coal deep, never rot, never cease, sand high, bone dirt, dust hard, mud bird, mud fish, mud word, rock flower, coral water, coral heart, coral breath. (Tina Campt)*

Large parts of the land,  
efficient storages, carbon sinks,  
currently re- and denaturalized.

Molecularly repaired, restored, conserved.

The bogs register and cannibalize  
sedate and rapid transformations  
local and planetary environmental policies.

Circulating decay and energy across geological epochs,  
the land mainly composed  
from a subterranean system.



Sphagnum mosses carpets  
thousands of years  
conserving water and nutrients.

Non-life forming life  
The metabolic processes of the sphagnum mosses  
to recite matter and disturb time.

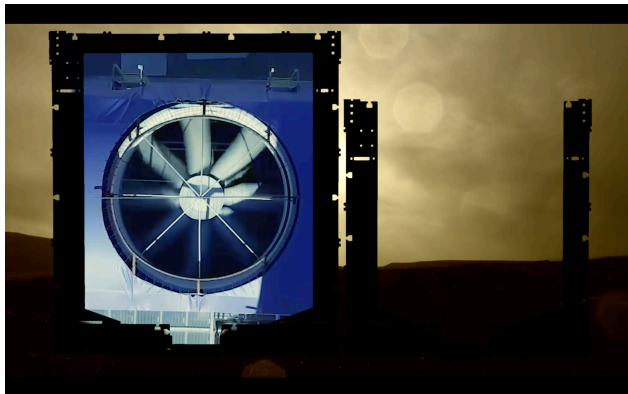
Where human memory fails in anaerobic layers.  
Cybernetic measuring, precisely dated,  
nuclear particles, volcanic ash and acid rain.

Incantation: seafixation, Ayesha Hameed/Elvin Brandhi



*And I mean unearthly because evil earth, its soil is stolen  
and its body is in the service of a soil,  
that loses and loses and loses. (A. Hameed)*

Layers of monstrous molecular intimacies  
crisscrossed by voidings and extractive valorizations.



Scars of human peat cuttings,  
perfect unearthly territories  
to imagine or to speculate on future extinction.

Planetary limits.

Here, the ghosts of the white Anthropocene  
preserved in deep time  
rendered inhuman materialities of the earth.

The darkness of the peatland pulsating.  
How to encounter  
the vibrating land without appropriation?

The contagious sting of a mosquito  
embodied a drone sound.  
Feeling the clap of the wings.

A western body conditioned through thinking in forms  
Orientations through central perspective  
now, just longing for the subterranean.

Imagining the land as molecules permanently contacting.



Haptic touch.  
Do those molecules feel addressed?  
Are they willing to respond?

They do send waves,  
each moment a rapport,  
relays of carbon interferences.

The sounds of mud soaking boots.  
Human bodies entering trance.  
How to become a collective body?

A mantra soothing the frightening solitude,  
humming the beloved to sleep.

Holding overtones  
infra-spaces, more than human bodies,  
vibrations, exchange.



Are these oscillations forms of knowing?  
Like incantations, chanted spells recorded in Gaelic Grimoires  
serving supranatural powers while stoking the fire, smelling the peat.

Invocations, carbon-based earthly soundings.

Incantation: Tropical Poltergeist (for Adam and Zack Khalil), Pedro Neves Marquez/Raw Forest



*About endings. This one isn't mine. Who is it by?  
Apocalypse is history's memory. I can't remember.  
(P. Neves Marquez)*

Deconstructing the visual semiotics of the land  
or as Adrian Piper puts it,  
overriding Western "visual pathology".

There is no way to represent the presence of the molecular.

Listen to the land, Tina Campt contributes,  
Every sound consists of more than what we hear.

Inserting a hydrophone into the bog  
modest murmurings.

Modelling the rhythms and dynamics of recorded data.  
As it happened in 1967,  
when Jocelyn Bell proved the existence

Pulsating sources of radio emission  
out of a 30-meter-long data sheet  
indicating an invisible, fast rotating neutron star.

What are the bogs telling us?



The small colorful leaves of the sphagnum mosses  
reflected on water surface  
Subtle swinging of grass.

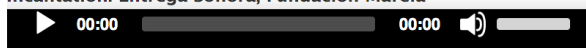
Invocation, a gentle deep sound.  
Fred Moten, such sounds require a kind of listening  
that activate rather than fragment.

Challenging and evoking.  
Silence of molecularized land.  
Conjuring, sensing, allowing, noticing, responding.

The surface of the brittle raffia  
caresses our fingertips,  
emptying imaginations, invoking textures.

Trans temporalities

Incantation: Entrega Sonora, Fundación Mareia



The slow and fast weather, the rain that wets us like tears of joy, invites us to recognize the spaces where the colors inspire us and the singing of the voices are part of what we call music. We re-signify our biocultural territories with our existence. (F. Mareia)

More groups of sentients to relate to,  
embodying the situational tremor,  
blind strolling of people.

Submerging, response-able joy of devastation?



Thulu, a manifold being  
eluding apprehension.

Fibers from raffia, an African palm tree,  
turning matter into care,  
Thulhu thu thu

Months of collective weaving and knotting. undefined, form/less.  
It bears the traces of a Berlin backyard studio  
and the stories of the weavers.

It smells of its use in the moors, micro doses.

Grains of sand from Dounreay nuclear beach,  
interspersed with nitrate-rich weeds of a structurally weak German land  
awaiting activation at mercury-contaminated Rio Atrato.

Openings for cosmopolitical relations?



Waiting to be invoked  
You want to become part of it, to preserve it,  
relay of intimate respect

Thulhu thu thu  
Before the sun harms you.

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listen to all incantations at: <http://knowbotiq.net/incantations/>

Incantation : Inscription by Lamin Fofana (voice of Sally Schonfeldt), Audio: 04:10 min

Lamin Fofana is an electronic producer, DJ and artist. His instrumental electronic music contrasts the reality of our world with what's beyond and explores questions of movement, migration, alienation, and belonging. He runs the Sci-Fi & Fantasy label which links techno back to the real world, to bridge aesthetics with socioeconomics, with ocean currents, with stale bread and dirty water.

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Incantation: Entrega Sonora by Fundación Mareia, Audio: 16:01 min

Fundación Mareia, a women's collective of artists/humanists who work with participatory research-action with a focus on race, gender, environmental and sonic-embodiment. Mareia enact art as a vehicle of social transformation, for a revitalization of ancestral practices/knowledges through ethno-educative and emancipatory methodologies, and of holistic healing that empowers the resilience and dignity of the Colombian Pacific.

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Incantation: Seafixation by Ayesha Hameed/Elvin Brandhi, Audio: 02:43 min

Ayesha Hameed's moving image, performance and written works explore contemporary borders and migration, critical race theory, Walter Benjamin and visual cultures of the Black Atlantic. Her projects Black Atlantis and A Rough History (of the destruction of fingerprints) have been performed and exhibited internationally. She is the co-editor of Futures and Fictions (Repeater 2017) and is currently the Program Leader for the MA in Contemporary Art Theory in the Department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths University of London. Elvin Brandhi is an improvising lyricist, producer and sound artist from Bridgend Wales, making auto-tune blast beats from field recordings, tapes, instruments and voice. Live shows are unyielding bursts of erupting animation where her caustic stream of consciousness cavorts with restless, glitched out heaviness. Other main projects include Yeah You, INSIN in collaboration with Bashar Suileman.

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Incantation: Tropical Poltergeist (for Adam and Zack Khalil) by Pedro Neves Marquez and Raw Forest, Audio: 03:26 min

Pedro Neves Marques is a visual artist, filmmaker, and writer. Born in Lisbon, Portugal, he lives in New York since 2010. Often based in Brazil, his work ranges from fiction, in the form of narrative films and short stories, to theoretical writings between art, cinema, and anthropology. Heavily influenced by cosmopolitics and feminist historians of science, his stories highlight the clash between disputing images of nature, technology, and gender. In all of them, science fiction is the key to thinking through both past histories of colonization and the possibility of non-Western futures.

Raw Forest is one of Margarida Magalhães' alter-egos that was born around 2010 in cybernetic space. Lately, her work has been manifesting itself mostly through sound - creating landscapes and environments by the means of immersive electronic music. Her landscapes arise from the ruins of past digital utopias and her music has been more and more influenced by this environment of disillusion and collapse, shaped by the present dystopian scenery.

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Incantation: Aerial fire by Margarida Mendes, Audio: 03:57 min

Margarida Mendes is an educator, curator, and activist living and working in Lisbon, and a member of the Oceano Livre environmental movement. Exploring the overlap between cybernetics, philosophy, ecology, and experimental film, her research investigates the dynamic transformations of the environment and their impact on societal structures and cultural production. She has directed several educational platforms such as *escuelita*, an informal school at Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo, Madrid (2017) and The Barber Shop project space in Lisbon dedicated to transdisciplinary research (2009-16). She was part of the curatorial team for the 11th Gwangju Biennale (2016) and the 4th Istanbul Design Biennale (2018). In 2016 she curated the long-term research

exhibition MATTER FICTIONS at Museu Berardo, Lisbon. She is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Research Architecture.]

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Incantation of Fear by Odete, Audio: 04:43 min

Odete is a performer, writer, visual artist and DJ who uses her own life—particularly her experience as a trans woman—as material for her practice. Her DJ sets draw out the relationships between different points in queer music history using vogue claps, punk screams and diva vocals, pop, politics and erratically pounding beats.

Incantation: The Playgrounds by Romy Ruegger, Audio: 07:50 min

Romy Ruegger develops performances, audio works and writings that consider how we move and communicate in social space, and the institutions and structures that control and restrict these actions. Her work is often site-specific and made in collaboration with other artists, creating sites of shared listening, encounter and unlearning that counter accepted narratives and value systems.