

Implantations

December 7-10, 2023

Elena Victoria Pastor
& ruins collective

Frappant

Curated by Maya Hayda from Collective Rewilding

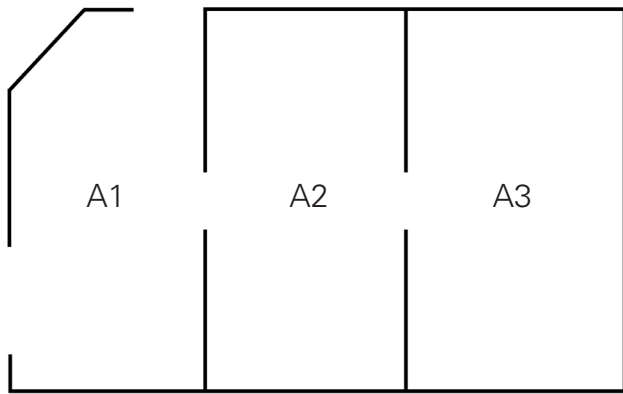
Opening Performance, December 7 at 20hrs
by Elena Victoria Pastor & David Wallraf

Implantations takes root in the memory of trees, engaging the arboreal as mnemonic, method, and mode of relation. Featuring video, paper-based, poetic, and performance works by Elena Victoria Pastor and ruins collective (Elias Parvulesco and Teta Tsybulnyk) this project reflects upon the incorporation of trees into anthropocentric remembrance structures, while also engaging with the subjectivity of trees as deeply reciprocal entities that are not just in the world, but of it.

Within this engagement, touch becomes especially important. Trees lucidly demonstrate an innate hapticity with the world, actively responding to their immediate environment and atmosphere and acting as a convening site for various ecologies, as well as memories and significations. Luce Ingray, for instance, writes of the tree as “not only vegetal. It is a meeting place of the elements, vegetal forms, species, and biological kingdoms.”¹ The intimacy of contact and convening is reiterated throughout *Implantations*, from Elena Victoria Pastor’s poetic performance activations of frottage technique with the trees slated to be felled in the construction of the new Sternbrücke bridge, to the meditative engagements of trees as repositories of legend, memory, and national pride in ruins collective’s video *dendro dreams*.

Rather than an interpretation or representation of the recollections of and by trees, the works in *Implantations* enact Donna Haraway’s definition of *articulations*. Haraway’s notion of articulation is founded on “situated knowledge” and “points of view” that allow a speaking *with* the other rather than a speaking *on* their behalf. As Haraway writes, “Nature may be speechless, without language, in the human sense; but nature is highly articulate. Discourse is only one process of articulation. An articulated world has an undecidable number of modes and sites where connections can be made.”² In a similar vein, Karen Barad highlights how speaking *with* is an act that is grounded in a non-anthropocentric model of knowledge, one that is grounded on “a direct material engagement, a practice of intra-acting with the world as part of the world in its dynamic material configuring, its ongoing articulation.”³ Trees, among other plants, are indistinguishable from their environs, consistently reacting to and changing what surrounds them. They participate in what Emanuele Coccia calls a “mutual compenetration between subject and environment, body and space, life and medium.”⁴ This compenetration extends to memory itself, which is shared by bark and brain, leaf and limb, bough and body. As the works in *Implantations* suggest, if we turn our attention to the arboreal and speak with its embodied articulations of the past, present, and future, we can become better rooted by modes of mutuality that acknowledge the dynamic and vibrant network of entities and forces that make up the world and all that is of it.

– Maya Hayda



A1

Elena Victoria Pastor
With citational contributions from Maya Hayda, Elias Parvulesco, Teta Tsybulnyk
2023, chalk on wall

A series of citational encounters drawn from texts concerning trees. Inscribed on the walls of Frappant with chalk by Elena Victoria Pastor, these multilingual and gestural interventions in the space act like a root system, connecting the various components and contributors of the exhibition. Imprints of language and form invoke transnational and multisensory encounters with the arboreal. One section of these gestures was initiated during a performance at the opening of the exhibition which featured sonic improvisations and site specific chalk interventions by Elena Victoria Pastor in collaboration with David Wallraf.

Excerpts from:

I and Thou by Martin Buber; *The Life of Plants* by Emanuele Coccia; "The Trees" by Stewart Cooke; "Sand and Foam" by Kahlil Gibran; Leyenda de Wahari-kuawai o "Árbol de los Frutos del Mundo"; "Can You Imagine?" by Mary Oliver; "Baüme," by Julian Schutting; "Дерево," by Patricia Nell Warren (Kylyna).

Elena Victoria Pastor

Scar, 2023

Canvas intervened with tree bark and plaster, variable size

In *Scar*, textured fragments of bark and fungi set upon a canvas underlie a plaster coating. At certain points, these fragments emerge from underneath the opaque veneer of the plaster, their organic materiality a stark contrast to the white pigment of the overlay and rectilinear framework of the canvas. This piece, for the artist, probes a difficult question: "How, within my existence and limited capacities, comparable in duration to the blink of an eye in relation to the existence of the planet, can I connect my work in

communion with nature? Is the science of ecology, in essence, not a humanized view of nature? Can art, in any case, provide answers?" A kind of tense negotiation between collected organic matter and human derived substances and framing contexts is ongoing in *Scar*. Placed low to the ground, the viewer encounters this work more like a palimpsestic fragment of an interface between art and nature rather than a completed painting that can be easily perceived and consumed by the human gaze.

A2

ruins collective (Teta Tsybulnyk, Elias Parvulesco)

dendro dreams, 2018

HD-video, 16:9, stereophonic audio; 24:20 min

A meditative encounter with fifteen "winners" of the National Trees of Ukraine competition, this video work explores the various articulations of trees within culture and how their remembrance is reflected in the languages of legislation, journalism, archive, lore, and poetry. Among other questions, the video invites us to ponder which entities are considered to be capable of memory, and what forms of memory are prioritized in the creation of commemoration frameworks.

Featured trees:

250-year-old Kniazha Apple Tree, Sumy Oblast, Krolevets

800-year-old Bohdan Khmelnytskyi Lindon, Lviv Oblast, Zolochiv Raion, Sasiv-Kotliv route

120-year-old Franz Josef Oak, Lviv oblast, Stryi Raion, Lysovychi

1700-year-old Pistachio, Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Nikita, Nikita Botanical Garden

1000-year-old Yuzefynskiy Oak, Rivne Oblast, Rokytna Raion, Hlynne

1000-year-old Maksym Zaluzniak Oak, Cherkasy Oblast, Chyhyryn Raion, Buda

600-year-old Golden Linden, Ternopil Oblast, Buchach

1000-year-old Taras Shevchenko Oaks, Cherkasy Oblast, Zvenyhorodka Raion, Budyshe

2000-year-old Olive, Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Nikita, Nikita Botanical Garden

1300-year-old Champion Oak, Zakarpattia Oblast, Velykyi Berezhnyi Raion, Stuzhytsia

200-year-old Almond on Malakhov Barrow, Sevastopol

800-year-old Monastyrskiy Oak, Chernihiv Oblast, Korop Raion, Rykhly

900-year-old Grunevald Oak, Kyiv, Koncha-Zaspa, Zhovten health resort

1300-year-old Yena Arbutus, Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Oreanda, Ai-Nikola Mountain

700-year-old Zaporizhia Oak, Zaporizhia

Credits:

Directors: Teta Tsybulnyk, Elias Parvulesco; Image: Oleg Isakov, Myroslava Klochko, Sasha Kovalenko, Elias Parvulesco, Artem

Pomazan, Teta Tsybulnyk, Maksym Zaitsev; Music: Andriy Orel; Sound: Anton Prykhodko; Cast: Myroslava Klochko, Maryana Yaremchyshyna; Producers: Elias Parvulesco, Julia Kovalenko; Costume design: ReSew; Costume sketch: Oksana Radkevych

Elena Victoria Pastor

Materia, 2022

3 sheets of handmade paper, variable size

Made in collaboration with Drew Mattot

These works are derived from Elena Victoria Pastor's 2022 installation of the video performance *In Search of A New Symbiosis* at Deichtorhallen Sammlung Falckenberg during the exhibition of the winners of the Arbeitsstipendien Hamburg 2020-21. The installation included the suspension of an intricate network of roots from trees felled in the sawmills outside of Hamburg. At the close of the exhibition, these roots took on a new form. As the artist notes, "Upon dismantling, I felt that the organic matter shouldn't be discarded like regular waste. Similar to the natural process in the forest, where there's a transformation from one state to another, in this case, the root could be artistically repurposed. With invaluable support from the Peace Paper Project, using pulp made from leaves and other components, we produced *Materia*. Roots turned into paper—a second life, a new cycle."

A3

Elena Victoria Pastor

Footprint, 2023

Frottage with charcoal, cotton paper, approximately 17 m

In *Footprint*, Elena Victoria Pastor invites us to explore moments of contact between tree bark, skin, and paper as transformative moments of connection and mutuality. As David Abraham writes in *The Spell of the Sensuous*, "there is an intimate reciprocity to the senses; as we touch the bark of the tree, we feel the tree touching us; as we lend our ears to the local sound and ally our nose to the seasonal scents, the terrain gradually tunes us in turn" (1996, p. 159). This sculptural work on paper was created using a frottage technique. Pastor used the uneven surface of oak tree bark from trees located at the intersection of Stresemannstr. and Max-Brauer-Allee in Hamburg as the underlying surface for rubbing a series of charcoal marks onto the long roll of paper, which has been installed in Frappant. The planned erection of a new Sternbrücke bridge, known as "Monster-Sternbrücke" by local activist groups, will forever change the memory of Hamburg's urban landscape. Up to ninety trees, mostly oaks, are slated for felling and seven adjacent historic buildings will be demolished. In *Footprint's* material entanglements of skin, surface, bark, and body, the memory of and about the trees of this site is activated in multiple modes. The work is a kind of precursory commemoration, offering a chance to consider which traces of bark, building, and bodies, and will remain, and which will disappear.

Elena Victoria Pastor (b. 1982) is an artist originally from Venezuela who immigrated to Europe in 2014 and has been based in Hamburg since 2018. Currently, her interest lies in seeking bridges, intersections, and connections between seemingly distant perspectives, such as the worldviews of indigenous communities in the Amazon and the philosophical ecosophical thought of central Europe. Through this exploration, she aims to deconstruct the anthropocentric gaze and foster an integrative horizontality that opens up possibilities for action with a smaller ecological footprint. Her work has been exhibited in various international venues, including Performance Arts Links in Stockholm, Kunstverein Harburger Bahnhof, Sofia Art Week in Bulgaria, Kunsthaus Hamburg, Museum of Modern Art Jesus Soto, Museum of Contemporary Art MACZUL, International Performance Studies Conference PSi28 Johannesburg, National Gallery of Arts Caracas, Casa de América in Madrid, and an auction with Annie Leibovitz at VAEA New York.

Teta Tsybulnyk (b. 1987) is an artist and aspiring psychoanalyst based in Kyiv, Ukraine. She studied sociology at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, social anthropology at the Central European University and clinical psychology at the Ukrainian Catholic University. She is a researcher of dreams and semiotics of the unconscious.

Elias Parvulesco (b. 1985, Ukraine) studied engineering, contemporary art and film studies. He worked as a film history scholar at the Oleksandr Dovzhenko National Centre in Kyiv. He was a nominee of the PinchukArtCentre Prize 2020, a nationwide prize in contemporary art for young Ukrainian artists.

In 2017 they co-founded the **'ruins collective'** art group. Their video works include *dendro dreams* (2017), *zong* (2019), *K-Object from LL-Group* (2019), *Salty Oscillations* (2021) and *Endless Sea of Sand* (2023). The films were screened at the international film festivals (FIDMarseille, Glasgow Short Film Festival, Molodist KIFF) and art exhibitions worldwide (MAXXI National Museum in Rome, Royal Art & History Museum in Brussels, documenta fifteen in Kassel). In 2020, they had a personal exhibition NHT at the Mala Gallery of Mystetskyi Arsenal, focused on the non-human gaze upon nature.

David Wallraf is a noise artist and theorist living in Hamburg. His artistic work deals with the repressed and uncanny sonic residues of quotidian life, crafting soundtracks for the creeping disaster we inhabit. He uses the logic and sonic imagery of nightmares as the logical reverse of 'capitalist realism': an uncanny undercurrent of daily experiences and algorithmic haunting of dreams as a communal experience. His works have been released on numerous international tape labels. He holds a BA in systemic musicology, an MA in time-based media and a doctoral degree in arts and philosophy from HFBK Hamburg. His PhD thesis *Grenzen des Hörens. Noise und die Akustik des Politischen (Limits of Hearing. Noise and the Acoustics of the Political)* has been published in German, an English translation is in progress. He participated in the Listening Biennial in South East Asia where he gave a workshop on sonic ecology and the soundscapes of the Anthropocene.

Maya Hayda is a curator, writer, and art historian based in New York. She has worked with Artists Space, Canal Projects, and PS122 Gallery and has written for The Wattis Institute, *LA Review of Books*, *FLAT Journal*, *Public Parking*, and The Drawing Center. Her research explores materiality, poetics, and the confluences of natural and built environments, particularly across Eastern Europe and the Global South. Her practice examines and activates art as an interdisciplinary framework that contends with and catalyzes relations between matter, media, and broader ecologies. She is a member of the curatorial group and research laboratory Collective Rewilding and holds a degree in Art History and English from Wesleyan University.

Collective Rewilding is an international, non-profit association founded in 2019 by Sara Garzón, Ameli M. Klein, and Sabina Oroshi, joined by Sofía Shaula Reeser del Rio in 2022 and Maya Hayda in 2023. Concerned about social and environmental sustainability, instituting a culture of care, and adapting to our ever shifting notions of territory, we seek to explore the larger question: How do we curate for a broken world?

Introduction Notes:

¹ Luce Irigaray and Michael Marder, *Through Vegetal Being: Two Philosophical Perspectives*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 151.

² Donna Haraway, "The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others." In *Cultural Studies*, edited by Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula A. Treichler, 295–337. (New York: Routledge, 1992), 309.

³ Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 379.

⁴ Emanuele Coccia and Dylan J Montanari, *The Life of Plants: A Metaphysics of Mixture*, (Cambridge UK: Polity Press, 2019), 42.

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