

ImagoInsecta

Zest Artist Collective_ZAC

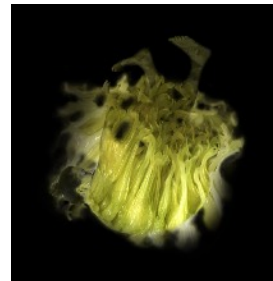
Dak'art OFF

19 May - 22 June 2022

SOKHAMON HOTEL DAKAR SÉNÉGAL



Sally Kidall • Lucia Loren • Karen Macher • Karin van der Molen • Elena Redaelli • Imke Rust



COHESION

Imago Insecta, more than a simple visual perception, can be extended to everything that ensures harmony and balance to life on earth. This brings us back to a more demanding respect for an environment whose complexity is to be considered as an essential natural reality. The confinement to which the world has been forced recently has exposed the fragility of man and his environment. This period has been and still is one of unprecedented creativity, particularly for artists who have made ecology a source of inspiration and a medium for study, experimentation and production. Among these actors, six have chosen to share their practice and experience during the fourteenth edition of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art. These artists come from the four corners of the world and have such rich backgrounds that their paths have crossed, sometimes often, in other countries. These encounters have strongly nourished the flame of a will to surpass oneself in order to make an ever more significant contribution to the fight to safeguard an environment that is the victim of various aggressions, the most violent of which are those of man.

Science and nature, man and his environment, myths and realities are some of the aspects of a narrative about our existence. The rigorous observation of the species that populate our existence reveals the reality of the complexity of nature and the interdependence of these same species. The narrative, in the form of an installation, a performance, a video or a sculpture, is to be appreciated as a hymn to the diversity, interdependence and adaptability that we share. It is also to be considered as an awareness of the reality of our existence, made of growth, transformation, sometimes mutation, maturation.

Their names are Sally Kidall, Lucia Loren, Karin Van der Molen, Karen Macher, Elena Redaelli and Imke Rust. They belong to the ZEST Art Collective. They have chosen to share their perception of the realities that surround us. From these realities they question the life of insects, these beings whose existence reflects our capacity of adaptation, renewal, transformation and reproduction. The works that are proposed have the particularity of being constructed from the environment of their production with elements that nature offers. They are created with respect for this same nature with which they maintain a constructive dialogue in a profound respect. I had a fabulous experience with Karin Van der Molen, Elena Redaelli and Imke Rust in the Banco National Park in the Ivory Coast. Each of them communicated with the forest before defining the place and form of intervention that this immense density of giant species seemed to grant them.

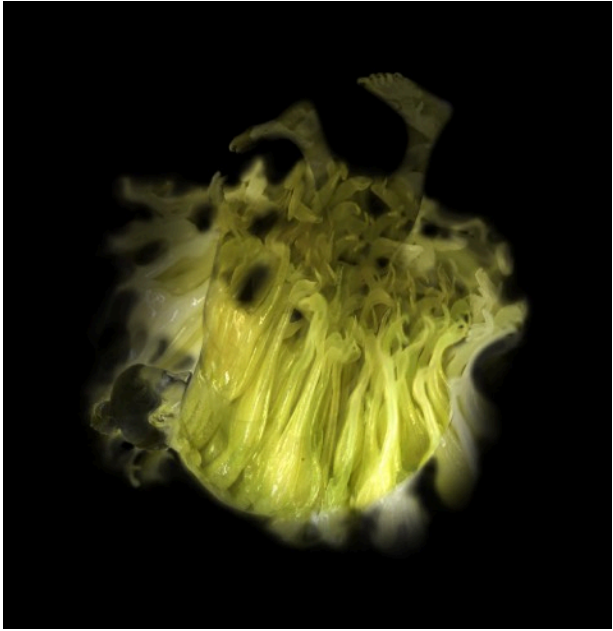
The proposal conceived for Dakar three years later, far from being a logical continuation of Abidjan Green Art initiated by the talented sculptor Jems Koko Bi, is from my point of view a commitment, as there have been others since, to pursue their quest for meaning in a passage made of deconstruction, decomposition and renewal. The ephemeral nature of the works of the Zest Art Collective will be supported by a mental map representing the intimacy of the relationship between species in a relationship that ensures the balance of our natural environment. Here we are at the heart of an environmental issue, the very one that requires each and everyone to take responsibility for future generations. Here we are also at the heart of the essential question of a humanity to be built and consolidated together.

Ousseynou WADE

Ousseynou Wade is a theorist and curator based in Dakar, Sénégal. From 2000 to 2013, he directed the Dakar Biennale. He has participated in numerous international conferences on cultural policy, cultural industries, and the financing of cultural activities, and organised professional meetings on art criticism, cultural journalism and design. In 2013 he was appointed Director of Visual Arts for the Minister of Culture of Senegal. Ousseynou Wade is currently an independent consultant with a focus on innovative contemporary African Art.



Zest Artist Collective would like to thank Ousseynou Wade and Hotel Sokhamon for their support and encouragement in realising this project.



ImagoInsecta

A project by Zest Artist Collective_ZAC

ZAC artists have immersed themselves into the parallel reality of the insect world through engaging in empathic and ecocentric dialogues with particular insect species indigenous to their country. By using various mind-mapping techniques as a framework for their research ZAC artists have generated speculative narratives and hypothetical imagery using different medium. These include photographic montage, conceptual installations, textiles, drawing, sculpture and embroidery. Through their art practice ZAC artists endeavour to explore and highlight insects' inseparable symbiotic relationships with the ecological balance of our planet.

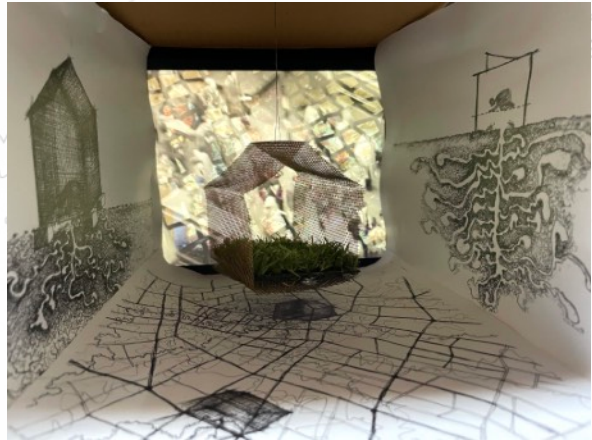
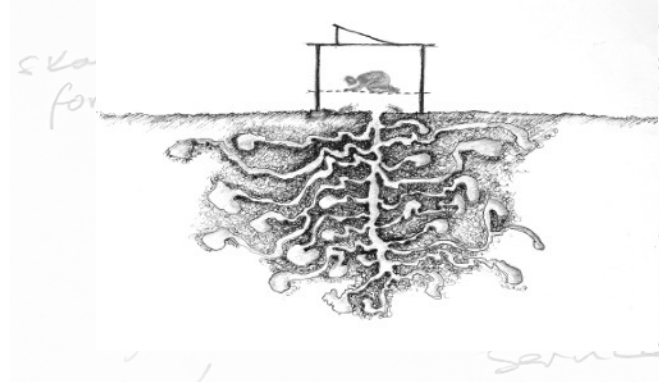
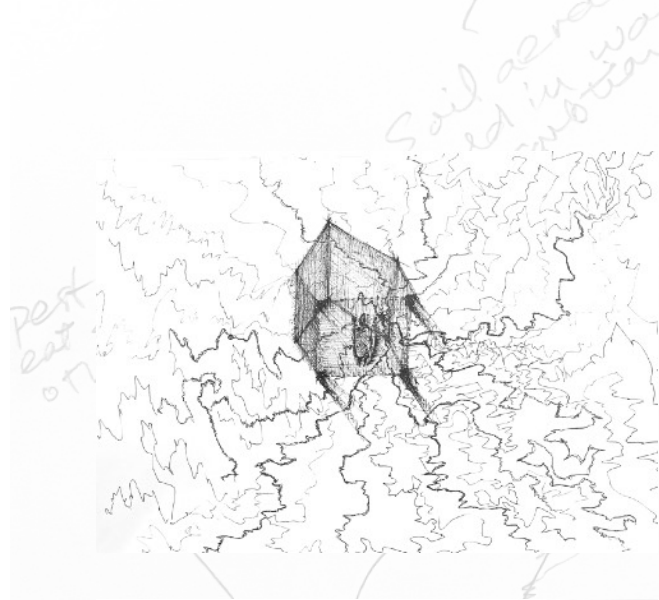
Zest Artist Collective_ZAC is an international collaboration of six artists from Peru, Australia, Italy, Namibia/Germany, Netherlands and Spain. They connected through their professional, site-responsive, nomadic nature based arts practice. During the onset of the COVID pandemic, unable to travel, they connected virtually through weekly meetings and intensive exchanges. Meeting online they brainstormed and researched concepts in relation to their new confined existence and the impacts on their country's ecology. These meetings have continued ever since and resulted in a number of collaborative projects within the collective's members.

Zest Artist Collective's inaugural project was launched in July 2020 at the Museum Schokland, Netherlands, followed by the International Biennale of Andorra 2021. In 2023 they have been invited to Canada to create a new work for the CAFKA Biennial.

zestartistcollective.weebly.com

Collaborative photo montage, printed on fabric

from left to right: Elena Redaelli, Karen Macher, Karin van der Molen
Imke Rust, Lucia Loren, Sally Kidall



explorative pathways.
collaborative colonies.
mapping
disappearance into underground/subway station.



Sally Kidall

AUSTRALIA | UK

Containment (installation)

For *Imago Insecta* Sally has created a site sensitive installation exploring human anxieties towards the insect world. She examines various human defensive systems designed to protect and insulate us from our fears of and vulnerability to insect contact. Sally Kidall has immersed her self into the world of Australian ants discovering how vital their role is in balancing ecosystems through soil regeneration, nutrient recyclers and release, pollinators and pest control. She asks: are all insects harmful? Using scent, colour, sound and physical barriers, Sally responded to the site and creates an experiential installation by creating a series of fabric enclosures that visitors walk through as they enter the hotel.

Sally Kidall travels the world to create her extensive ephemeral interventions beyond the confines of the gallery. She strives to inspire and challenge a wider audience, provoking thoughts/questions and stimulating discussion. With her background in sculpture and MA at Portsmouth Uni, UK, she has over 35 years of making her international environmental practise. She has exhibited throughout the UK & Australia, India, Spain, Ukraine, USA, South Korea, France, India, New Zealand, Netherlands, Andorra.

www.sallykidall.com

MOST SUCCESSFUL INSECT GROUPS

STRATEGIES ADAPTED FOR ALL HABITATS

structures capable of

UNCONSCIOUS → drives consciousness to awaken and adopt defined larva creativity continuous movement

mummies as pupas

1/5

COMPLETE METAMORPH

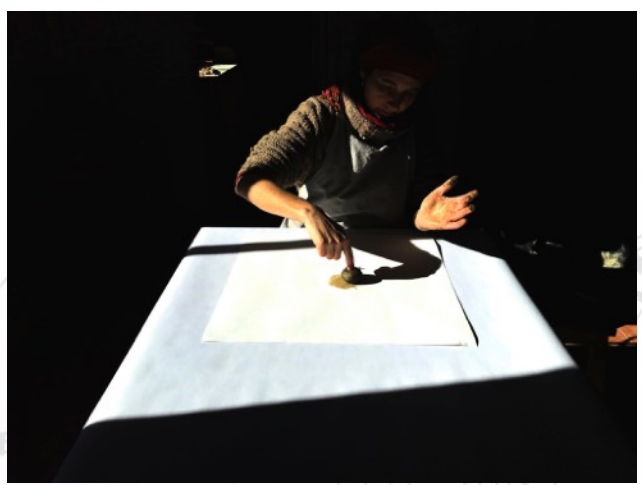
Although they do not have social 'behaviour'



eats and lays eggs indoors risky strategy larvae can eat the common house

Take food and leave Compact manure into a ball

apartments beetles to the main chambers tubes.



EXCRE

grown or grazing

SOIL BREATHING

Negative Consequences Biodiversity

CRITICAL SITUATION OF BEETLES

IVERMECTINA (Broad Spectrum antiparasitic for livestock) IT'S TRANSMITTED TO MANURE HARMFUL / LETHAL BEETLES



Lucia Loren

SPAIN

During the *Imago Insecta* preparations Lucia explored the important role of dung beetles in turning animal waste into soil nutrients. She developed a recipe using clay and dung to create new works.

In recent years, the works of Madrid-based artist Lucia Loren have sought to address, from different angles and using different techniques, the interchangeable relationships between human beings and the environment and landscape in which we live. In all her artistic interventions, Loren uses the elements of the landscape to reflect on the concept of cultural landscape. She has carried out specific interventions in many natural environments in Spain, Italy, Portugal, Poland, Switzerland, Argentina or Western Sahara.

www.lucialoren.com

DIFFERENT STAGES IN LIFE



BUILD THEIR CASES WITH MATERIALS THEY HAVE AROUND: STONE, SAND, WOOD...



UGLY BUT IMPORTANT FOR THE ECOSYSTEM

FOOD FOR OTHER ANIMALS

INDICATE W POLLUTION L


VERY SENS

CASE: PROTECTION / TRANSFORMATION

TRICHOPTERA
CADDISFLIES



TRICHOS: HAIR
PTERA: WINGS
(GREEK)

WINGS

SOME OF THEM TRANSLUCID

PROCESS

COMPLETE METAMORPH

fold onto body like ro

BUILD SHELTERS

USE MATERIALS AROUND

PLACE

PROJECT



Karen Macher

PERU

Metamorphosis (Video and sculpture)

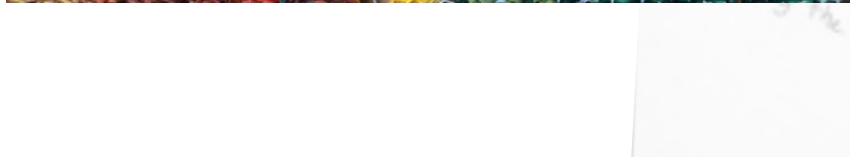
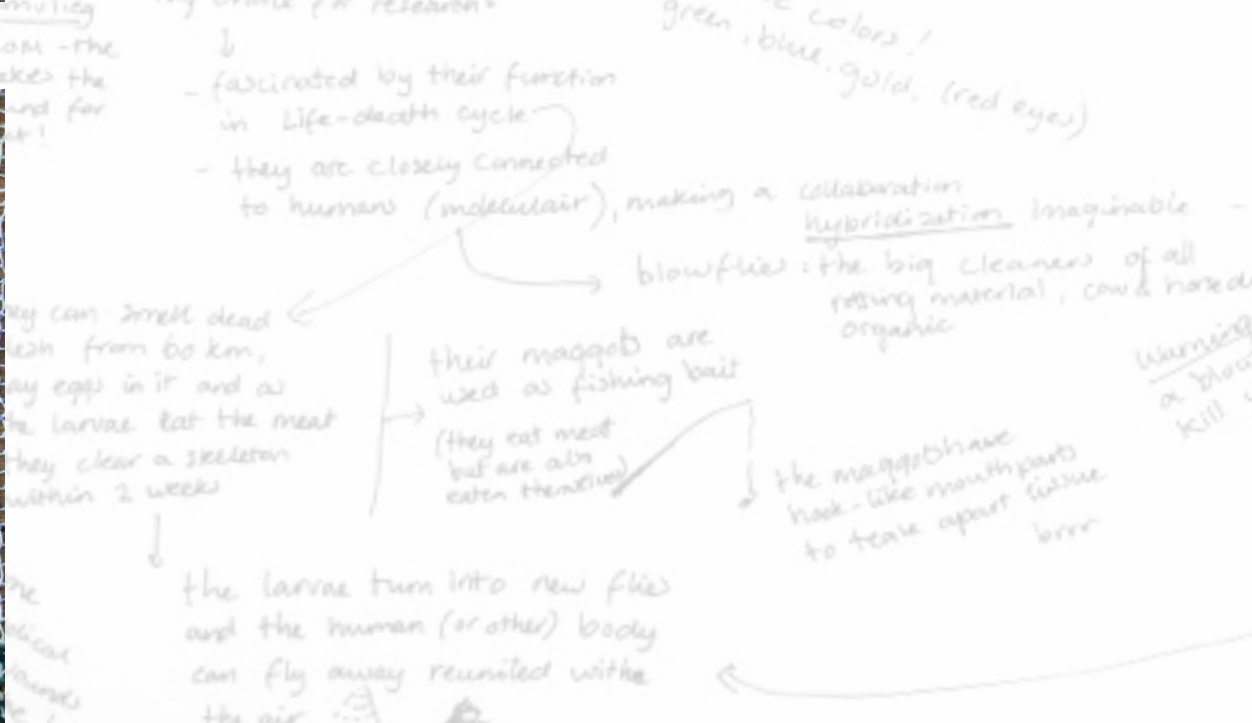
Metamorphosis consists of two parts: a sculpture from concrete and a video performance in which the artist uses his sculpture to directly experience the transformation. This work was conceived during the first year of the COVID pandemic when the whole world became paralysed and there seemed no way out. During this long period of isolation and disconnection Karen wrote:

"I wove a cocoon with woods, my own cocoon, for not thinking of anything else. It was a long process. I felt vulnerable while weaving, my transformation was imminent. And the whole process came with the certainty of knowing that, if I could overcome all that process, I could be on my way of evolving in a better version of myself."

A process of metamorphosis involves a drastic structural, mental and emotional change. It means becoming something else other than what what one was before evolution. This performance occurs within a safe space created by the artist, who enters a hermit mode within the structure that covers and protects her during this vulnerable state. At that moment something extraordinary happens: the subject disconnects from its external reality and only focuses solely on the function of breathing. Only breathing. Until the transformation is complete and it is ready to face the world again. Practically all the structures that formed it before are destroyed to form a new being whose capacities are increased and its ability to adapt to the outside world is better and different. She reinvents herself, she becomes.

Born in Lima, Peru, Karen has represented her country in several international symposiums in Europe, the Middle East, South and North America and Asia. In addition to sculpture, she creates drawings and installations related to materials and ecological themes. She lives and works in Lima.

www.karenmacherportafolio.blogspot.com





Karin van der Molen

NETHERLANDS

A Fly's Vision (Embroidered rug)

The eyes of a fly are multifaceted, seeing the world in a myriad of blurred colours. Karin van der Molen's embroidered mind-map, *A Fly's Vision*, imagines how a fly perceives nature.

The work comments on both the way insects indulge in their colourful environment without judgment and the perilous situation that threatens their survival due to the destructive activities of humans.

The bright sunflower mingles with similar shapes and colours of a bushfire and a lone firefighter tries to save what he can.

The fly caught Karin's attention because of its crucial role in the cycle of life on earth. They are the great digesters of dead material and cattle dung transforming it into soil nourishment for new growth. Her research gave her an inspiring thought: *"death is not a final end, but a movement along the lines in the infinite meshwork, without which life would not be possible"*

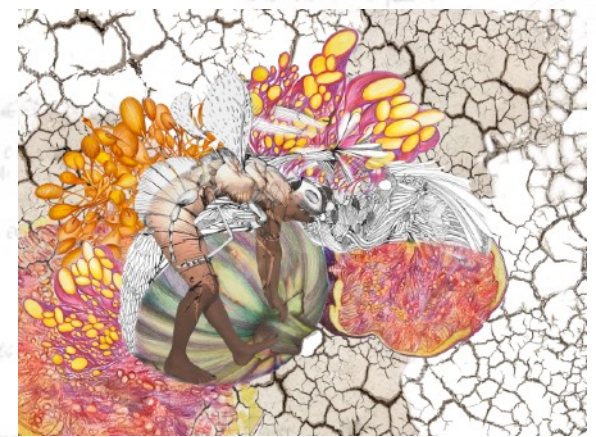
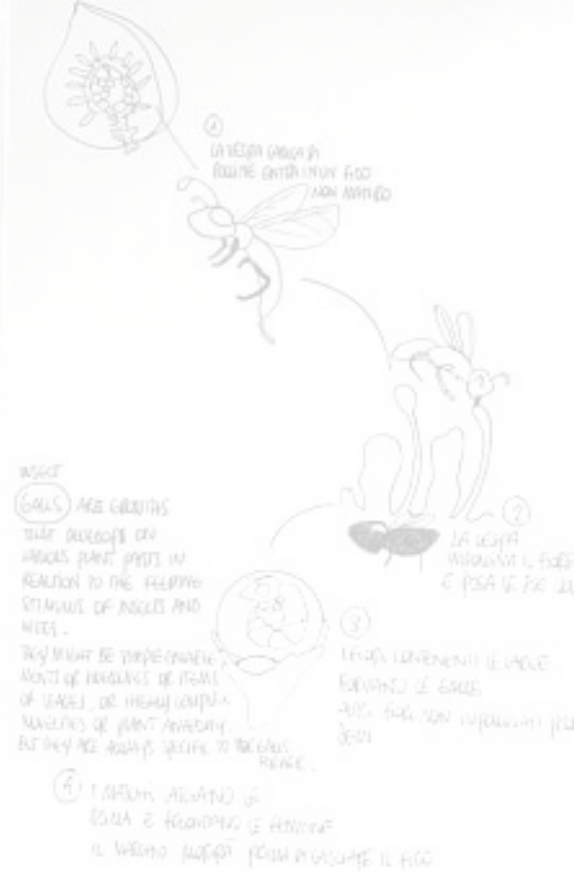
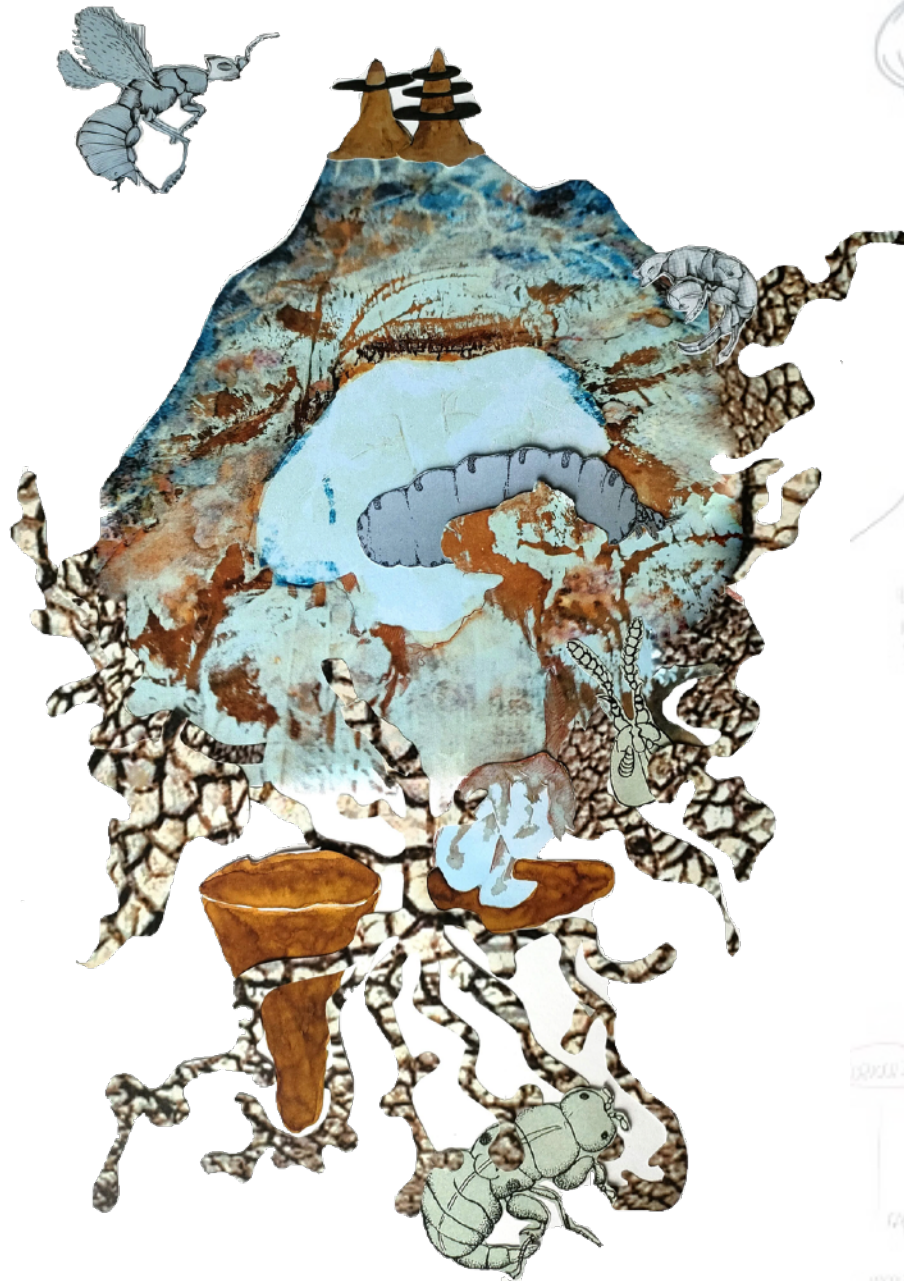
More Than A Human Can Do (Video)

For the artist, mimicry, imagining oneself as an insect, represents a possible beginning to enter a new world. In this performance Karin was inspired by the idea of the pupa, the caterpillar wrapping itself in a cocoon, while inside it slowly transforms into a butterfly, then flies away in a completely new form. In a deserted woollen factory the artist spun endlessly around its centre with a thread of wool, until she could hardly move. And then the deep desire to get out, to free herself. This mimicry is an ephemeral expression of the power of transformation that exists in all life forms. It is more than a human can do, it is more than a caterpillar can do, until it gives up its Self and becomes a new being.

Karin van der Molen develops most of her environmental works on site, in exhibitions and artistic residencies. Invited by the region, its natural possibilities and limitations, its history and culture, her large-scale ephemeral and semi-permanent works reflect a sense of place.

Karin van der Molen has exhibited around the world, including Japan, Mongolia, South Korea, the United States, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Poland and the Ivory Coast.

www.karinvandermolen.nl



- INTERAZIONE: UNA SPECIE DI VESPA CHE È BENEFICA A UNO SPECIE DI FICO

- COMPETIZIONE: UNA SPECIE DI VESPA CHE È BENEFICA A UNO SPECIE DI FICO

- MUTUALISMO: ENTRAMBE LE SPECIE TRARRANO BENEFICIO



Elena Redaelli

ITALY

Elena's collage technique allows her to imagine new narratives combining images from various contexts in a world free of human rules. By immersing herself in the world of insects, she creates experimental visual narratives that tell stories of passion, tragedy, dedication, sacrifice and boundless love between different insect species.

For *Imago Insecta* Elena focuses in particular on the mutualistic relationship between the wasp and the fig, exploring how they support each other during their reproductive cycles.

This relationship, essential to the survival of two different species, was not simple and did not occur in a predictable way, but was generated by the successful interaction between two seemingly disconnected parts of the environment.

Elena Redaelli explores matter, transformation, processes of generation and decomposition involving different levels of control and challenging the limits of authorship and active intervention. Sometimes the material takes over, sometimes the participants or the environment does, resulting in a constant process of transformation, improvisation and exchange. The medium becomes a cross-pollination of techniques from the fields of craft, sculpture, textile, drawing and relational aesthetics. The act of artistic creation is a process of interrogation in a new environment and her personal way of connecting with new cultures and people.

She holds an MFA from UCA, London, UK, and an MA in Sculpture from the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome.

Since 2010, she has been living and exhibiting her work in different countries: among them Italy, Norway, Australia, USA, Japan, China, Taiwan (...) building her practice through different AIR programs.

www.elelena.com





Imke Rust

NAMIBIA | GERMANY

Through her research and process-driven practice Imke Rust imagines alternative modes of coexistence and transformation with the natural world. She enters into a creative dialogue with the African termite, exploring the intersection of science and myth. From this engagement new intuitive and speculative narratives emerge that are expressed in various media such as drawing, collage, installations and video.

For *Imago Insecta*, Imke collaborated with Elena Redaelli in creating large collages, in which they explore the interdependence between insects, nature and humans.

Its about rethinking how we view the natural world in order to illuminate how nature itself is intertwined into our being:

"In my work, I try to go into a deep correspondence with the termite - a being which I am familiar with since I grew up on a farm in Namibia scattered with termite heaps.

Does the Termite queen really live forever? Is the termite hill a body, a self-regulating organic process that continuously reacts to its changing environment? Are the elements of a termite colony relevant to understand colonisation?

These and many more questions from my research guide me in my open creative, dialogical process and correspondence with the termites."

Imke Rust is a multidisciplinary Namibian artist, based in Germany and Namibia. In her work she explores the relationships between myth, reality, humans and nature. She challenges entrenched perceptions of being human and offers fresh perspectives. Her art making is deeply personal and aims to create meaning through process, narrative and material. Simultaneously she easily bridges the divides between cultures and continents, between history and the present and between humans and nature, establishing a universal narrative and understanding. Her works range from site-specific installations, lens-based performances to mixed media paintings and usually are process-orientated, site-responsive and often ephemeral.

Rust holds a BVA of Visual Arts Degree from the University of South Africa.

www.imkerust.com