



© Shaken Grounds, Collage on Michael Wutky, *The Phlegæan Fields*, 1780

Shaken Grounds, Shifting Skies. Art as Seismography of Precarious Presences

Symposium – Performative Screening – Exhibition
MAXXI, Museo nazionale delle Arti del XXI secolo, Rome

Video Gallery, 22 – 24 October 2024

Artists:

Nikolaus Gansterer (AT), Mariella Greil (AT),
Peter Kozek (AT), and Lucie Strecker (DE/AT)
in collaboration with
Nicola Fornoni (IT), Helga Franza (IT),
Victor Jaschke (AT) and VestAndPage
(Andrea Pagnes (IT) / Verena Stenke (DE))

Requested speakers for the symposium:

Arno Böhler (Philosopher, AT),
Alexander Damianisch (Art & Research, AT),
Sabine Folie (Art Historian and Curator AT),
Rosa Maria Di Maggio (Forensic Geologist, IT)

In collaboration with

Austrian Cultural Forum Rome,
University of Applied Arts Vienna,
Angewandte Performance Lab (APL), and
Austrian Science Fund (FWF)

Summary

“The geo-philosopher moves along the crest of turbulence, on the shoulders of waves that envelop mind, energy, and matter, and that diffuse them into the atmosphere.” *

Even before the Anthropocene, disruptive environments motivated artists to reflect on the precariousness and origins of their times. The natural cataclysms in southern Italy, for example, have been the focus of scientific research and artistic expression for centuries. According to the myth of Rome’s foundation, Aeneas accessed the underworld through the trembling Phlegraean Fields—now Europe’s largest illegal toxic wasteland—to seek guidance on where to settle after his long journey. Meanwhile, the major eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE was associated with the sudden threats of the Iron Age, marked by austerity and wars.

The artistic research project “Shaken Grounds, Shifting Skies” revisits the continental margins of southern Italy, exploring the intersection of seismic activity and human-caused environmental damage through the diverse practices of an international group of artists and scientists. They recognize that seismic activity, once seen as a natural force of Gaia, can now also be induced by human interference. Art, as research and practice, excels in detecting and expressing the changing relationship between humanity and our evolving, technologically influenced, and highly damaged geological environment.

The symposium, performative screening, and exhibition at the MAXXI Video Gallery showcases how artists, by hyper-sensitizing body and mind, develop geo-sensory skills that align with earthquake prediction, geological deep-time perception, and forensic geology. Invited art historians, geologists, and cultural theorists will combine lectures with open discussions. Public screenings of artistic research documentaries will be activated through shared performative practices, along with an exhibition of artefacts.

A documentation of the symposium will be opened on 7 November 2024 at the Austrian Cultural Forum Rome and will be on display until 28 November. As part of the group exhibition “Imagine Climate Dignity: Artistic Collaborations”, also in spring at Künstlerhaus Vienna.
www.ontheroadcall.at

* Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (London: The Athlone Press, 1993), XV

Programme

Tuesday, 22 October 2024

- 5:30 pm Welcome & Aperitif: Francesco Stocci, Irene de Vico Fallani
- 6:00pm Introduction and Screening: “Shaken Grounds, Shifting Skies”
Nikolaus Gansterer, Mariella Greil, Peter Kozek, Lucie Strecker
- 6:30pm Lecture: “Seismicity, Art and Revolution. Revisiting the
Phlegraean Fields (working title)”, Sabine Folie
- 7:00 pm Lecture: “Strata of Artistic Research (working title)”, Alexander
Damianisch
- 7:30 pm Public Discussion moderated by Alexander Damianisch

Wednesday, 23 October 2024

- 11:00 am – 3:30 pm Screening and Exhibition: “Shaken Grounds, Shifting
Skies” Exposition of artistic research film scenes and artefacts,
along with interviews with geologists, art historians and philoso-
phers
- 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm Resonance I: Summary of the previous day, exchange,
close viewing and shared practices
- 5:30 pm Welcome & Aperitif: Mariella Greil and Peter Kozek
- 6:00 pm Screening: “Trembling Teorema”
- 6:15 pm Documentation and Screening: “Volcanic Attitude Festival”,
Helga Franza
- 6:45 pm Performance Lecture: “Rituals of Resonance”, Mariella Greil,
Peter Kozek with Victor Jaschke
- 7:30 pm Public Discussion moderated by Alexander Damiansich

Thursday 24. October 2024

- 11:00am – 3:30 pm Screening and Exhibition: “Shaken Grounds, Shifting Skies”, Exposition of artistic research film scenes and artefacts, along with interviews with geologists, art historians and philosophers
- 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm Resonance II: Summary of the previous day, exchange, close viewing and shared practices
- 5:30 pm Welcome & Aperitif: Nikolaus Gansterer and Lucie Strecker
- 6:00 pm Lecture: “N.N.”, Rosa Maria Di Maggio
- 6:30 pm Prophetic Sound Installation: “N.N.”, VestandPage (Verena Stenke, Andrea Pagnes)
- 6:45 pm Translecture: “Seismographies of Shaken Grounds”, Nikolaus Gansterer, Arno Böehler
- 7:30 pm Public Discussion moderated by Alexander Damianisch



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