

Press Release, Wednesday 11 May 2022

BACK TO EARTH

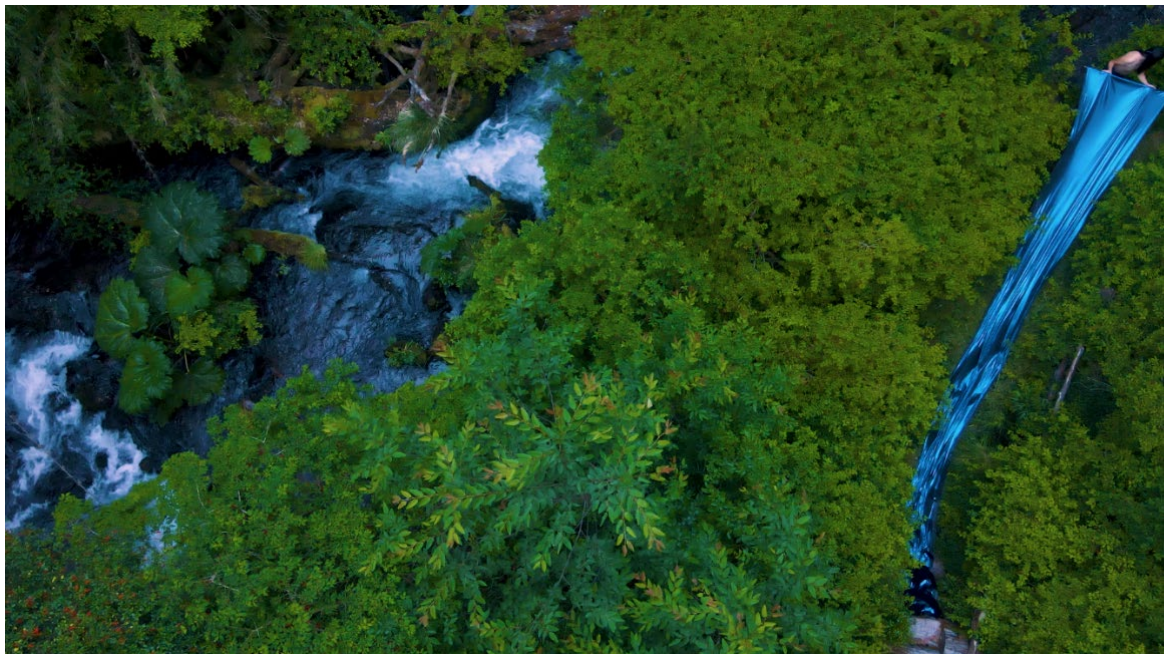
A multi-site exhibition responding to the climate crisis featuring Dineo Seshee Bopape, Brian Eno, Cooking Sections, Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg and Formafantasma among many others

A major live programme featuring award-winning opera *Sun & Sea* and the return of the Serpentine Marathon of talks and performances

Serpentine North, The Magazine and other locations

22 June – 18 September 2022

Press View, Tuesday 21 June 2022, 9.30am – 1pm



Seba Calfuqueo, *Tray Tray Ko*, video, 6'13, 2022, film still, photo by: Sebastian Melo. © Serpentine and the artist.



Back to Earth is Serpentine's long-term, interdisciplinary, artistic programme responding to the urgent climate crisis. The programme will feature an exhibition staged at Serpentine North from 22 June to 18 September 2022, with further works situated in Serpentine's restaurant The Magazine and further afield in Kensington Gardens. *Back to Earth* will also feature an extensive live programme with activations during the exhibition and for the next two years.

Evoking responses to the climate emergency and spotlighting a multitude of durational perspectives from across the globe, *Back to Earth* will reflect how we can learn from diverse experiences to create change.

Back to Earth exhibition at Serpentine North

Brian Eno is creating a new sound and light installation emerging from his research into generative compositions.

Artist **Tabita Rezaire/Amakaba** and architect **Yussef Agbo-Ola/Olaniyi Studio** will present an installation exploring our relationship to medicinal plants. They have designed a temple as a multisensory space for audiences to remind themselves of the healing powers of plants. The temple is constructed using materials recycled from Serpentine's previous exhibitions and adorned with specially woven panels that will be reassembled into a building in Amakaba, Rezaire's centre for agroecology in French Guiana. This installation is presented in collaboration with Palais de Tokyo, Paris.

Further highlights will include a series of earth and clay forms by **Dineo Seshee Bopape**. The artist's movements and breath-are translated into sound pieces by animist and shaman **Catitu Tayassu** in a collaboration that explores methods of reengaging with our bodies, lands and ancestors.

Research-based design studio **Formafantasma** will present a manifesto for exhibition-making that minimises carbon emissions, alongside many other artist's designed posters. Artist **Giles Round**'s intervention will feature mirrored surfaces and forms based on the satellites that survey environmental changes to maximise natural daylight and reduce the need for artificial lighting.

A new wallpaper by artist **Carolina Caycedo** will envelop the exhibition space, collaging satellite images of waterways that have been shaped by human intervention across the Americas. A new film commission, *The Family and The Zombie* by **Karrabing Film Collective**, will premiere in the UK to explore the significance of connection to land and in Indigenous communities.



A unique smell score by artist and researcher **Sissel Tolaas** will evolve through the space and over the course of the exhibition, drawing on the emotional power of our sense of smell to address the need for change in response to the climate emergency.

Expanding beyond the exhibition space, the gallery shop will be transformed through a collaboration between design and experiential futures company **Superflux** and designer **Ghazaal Vojdani**. They will present a shop for the future that aims to gather knowledge from a group of advisors, offering visitors a selection of books and products that reflect alternative models of consumption in a changed climate.

Bettina Korek and Hans Ulrich Obrist said: "Now in its third year, the *Back to Earth* initiative has been a remarkable testament to what a dynamic platform for interdisciplinary ideas and practices Serpentine is. This exhibition is a chance to share a selection of *Back to Earth* projects with audiences, under the common banner of a show, to think about the interplay among artists, thinkers, performers and curators, and to consider the importance of building new connections between art and society. There could not be a more universal subject matter than the Earth and the climate crisis we are facing as natural beings. We are galvanised by the calls for change and creative solutions that have come to life through *Back to Earth* and hope that they inspire more."

Placing sustainability at the core of the exhibition, *Back to Earth* at Serpentine North will continue to use existing structures and reuse the materials from disassembled parts of *Radio Ballads*, the preceding exhibition, to minimise waste build and reimagine exhibition making. Almost all work has been produced locally and inks and papers involved in printed materials have been selected to prioritise recycled processes.

Beyond Serpentine North and 2022

Coinciding with the exhibition, *Back to Earth LIVE* will bring together Serpentine's vast network of individuals and organisations involved in tackling the environmental crisis in an extensive and **ambitious 3-month programme of talks, performances and debates.**

The programme will include the UK premiere of the award-winning opera performance *Sun & Sea*, winner of the Golden Lion for best National participation, Venice Biennale 2019, by composer **Lina Lapelytė**, librettist **Vaiva Grainytė** and director **Rugilė Barzdžiukaitė**, curated by **Lucia Pietroiusti**, Founder of Serpentine's General Ecology programme. **Hosted at The Albany, Lewisham, London, from 23 June to 10 July**, the show is **co-presented by LIFT, the Albany and Serpentine** as part of LIFT 2022, *Back to Earth* and We Are Lewisham. We Are Lewisham is presented by Lewisham



Council, in partnership with the Albany. Lewisham is the London Borough of Culture 2022, a Mayor of London initiative.

Reflecting Serpentine's long-term commitment to working together with artists in the face of climate change and following on from the organisation's long-standing experience in the production of ambitious, multidisciplinary, live events at the forefront of contemporary thought, the ***Back to Earth Marathon***, co-curated with **Brian Eno**, will bring together participants across all disciplines to address today's environmental urgencies on Earth Day 2023 (22nd April).

Back to Earth LIVE will also present the premiere of **Manthia Diawara's** *Back to Earth* film commission, emerging from conversations with the community in which he lives for part of the year, namely the seaside town of Yene, Senegal. The film records the local community's responses to climate change, and his own part as a filmmaker, in relation to the philosophical thinking of Édouard Glissant. Co-commissioned with **MUBI and PCAI Polygreen Culture & Art Initiative**. *Back to Earth LIVE* will also feature a newly commissioned performance by **Himali Singh Soin and David Soin Tappeser**, as well as workshops and discussions by **Kate Raworth, Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg and Bones Tan Jones**.

Curated by Radical Ecology, a series of workshops, screenings and public events will embed questions around pollution, ecocide, migrant justice and climate finance within the context of the borough, and will bring together campaigner **Rosamund Kissi-Debrah**, ecocide lawyer **Philippe Sands** and musicians **Tomorrow's Warriors** among others eminent participants.

Back to Earth LIVE will include **Queer Earth and Liquid Matters**, a two-day event co-curated with **Jack Halberstam** and **Macarena Gómez-Barris** and presented in collaboration with Queercircle and Stone Nest in July. The shows will dive into transformation, queerness, the natural and unnatural, wild, decolonial, Indigenous and submerged perspectives. The programme will feature talks, performances, film and more from a stellar list of participants including **Jack Halberstam, Victoria Hunt, Macarena Gómez-Barris, Juan Francisco Salazar, Xavi Aguirre, P. Staff, Sebastián Calfuqueo, Adham Faramawy, Bhanu Kapil, Bones Tan Jones** and **Ash Fure**.

During the course of *Back to Earth*, **Cooking Sections** will present **new CLIMAVORE** elements of the menu on offer at The Magazine in collaboration with Benugo and chef Tomas Kolkus. The new ingredients Cooking Sections embed in the menu will continue to have a focus on regenerative aquaculture and agriculture.

Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg's *Pollinator Pathmaker* at North Flower Walk in Kensington Gardens and online at www.pollinator.art will be ongoing for the next two years. This uses a data-led algorithmic method of planting to focus on the needs of pollinators in the UK. Along with external partners, a methodology for recording and monitoring pollinator patterns is being developed.



NOTES TO EDITORS

About *Back to Earth*

Back to Earth is a multi-year project that invites over sixty leading artists, architects, poets, filmmakers, scientists, thinkers and designers to respond to the environmental crisis. With the support of partner organisations and networks, these collaborators are devising artistic campaigns, protocols and initiatives.

Interdisciplinary at its core, *Back to Earth* manifests throughout all of Serpentine's onsite, offsite and online programmes, sharing its resources in order to amplify ongoing projects or campaigns around the climate emergency, as well as to develop new ones. *Back to Earth* considers ecology as embedded in everyday practices and agencies.

Back to Earth is a programme about change and a catalyst for change. Echoing the global response to the climate crisis, *Back to Earth* is a complex web of interconnected research, interventions and activities. The project asks: What new ecosystems can foster agency within organisations? Which kinds of research-sharing, resource-sharing and collaborative working practices are necessary to present complex responses to complex problems? How can arts institutions bring visibility to climate actions that create positive change for communities, places and imaginations around the world?

Previous collaborators include Judy Chicago, Sir David Adjaye, Vivienne Westwood, Etel Adnan and Olafur Eliasson. The programme emerged out of Serpentine's long-standing engagement with the topics of extinction and the disappearance of species, knowledges and customs, which began with the 2014 Extinction Marathon, co-curated with artist Gustav Metzger, as well as out of General Ecology, Serpentine's overarching environmental research project.

About Serpentine

Championing new ideas in contemporary art since 1970, Serpentine has presented pioneering exhibitions for half a century from a wide range of emerging practitioners to the most internationally recognised artists of our time.

140 Artists' Ideas for Planet Earth edited by Hans Ulrich Obrist and Kostas Stasinopoulos has been relaunched as a paperback edition. Through 140 drawings, thought experiments, recipes, activist instructions, gardening ideas, insurgences and personal revolutions, artists who spend their lives thinking outside the box guide readers to a new worldview.

***Back to Earth* is curated by**

Sarah Hamed, Assistant Exhibitions Curator

Rebecca Lewin, Curator, Exhibitions and Design



Hans Ulrich Obrist, Artistic Director
Lucia Pietroiusti, Strategic Consultant, Ecology and Founder, General Ecology
Kostas Stasinopoulos, Associate Curator, Live Programmes

Jo Paton, former Chief Producer
Holly Shuttleworth, former Producer

About *The Family and The Zombie*

The Family and The Zombie is a co-commission by Serpentine, London, for *Back to Earth*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris for *Reclaim the Earth* and E-WERK Luckenwalde for *POWER NIGHTS: Being Mothers*. With the support and collaboration of Indigenous Language and Art Program, Department of the Arts, Australia and Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority, Darwin, Australia. Additional thanks to Madre, Napoli.

About *Pollinator Pathmaker*

Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg's Edition Garden 3 is presented with special support from Nicoletta Fiorucci Foundation and Google Arts and Culture, and will be on display for the next two years.

Originally commissioned by the Eden Project with the support of Garfield Weston Foundation as part of *Create a Buzz*. Additional partners include Gaia Art Foundation and collaborators Google Arts & Culture. Curated by Misha Curson and Celine Holman.

By creating a series of international edition gardens, *Pollinator Pathmaker* is growing into a global art-led campaign to save the world's pollinators. A mission that is enhanced by the first international commissioner, LAS (Light Art Space) in Berlin, Germany.

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Press images available at serpentinegalleries.org/press



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Nina and David Fialkow

ARTIST CIRCLE

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