



Contracts of Recognitions

Artists:

Justyna Górowska
Jakob Kukula & Leon Lapa Pereira
Susan Schuppli
András Cséfalvay
Radha D'Souza & Jonas Staal
Elena Mazzi

Angela Anderson
Marwa Arsanios
Caitlin Berrigan

Curators:

Lucia Bergamaschi & David Přílučík

**“The Earth speaks to us
in terms of forces, bonds, and interactions,
and that's enough to make a contract”.**

M. Serres

Contracts of Recognitions depart from a set of intertwined questions: How can alliances be imagined beyond the human? What does it mean to represent more-than-human entities within legal, political, and artistic frameworks? And how does ownership—of land, bodies, or futures—shape the conditions under which recognition becomes possible?

Rather than offering definitive answers, this exhibition is oriented by a set of open questions that have emerged from our own engagement with these issues through artistic practice and research. What kind of subject is presupposed by contemporary legal frameworks, and can environmental justice be meaningfully extended beyond the human? Are rights necessarily tied to subjectivity, or can they be rethought through relations, places, and practices of cohabitation? How do legal institutions perform reality, and what other institutional forms might be imagined? What are the limits and strategies of practices of resistance, and which forms can non-subjects or more-than-human subjects take within these struggles?

As authors directly involved in these questions, we sought to learn from the experiences, strategies, and conceptual tools developed by others. While the challenges addressed here resonate across different geographical contexts, our focus is situated in Europe—the region we inhabit and within which these debates are currently unfolding. This situated perspective allows us to observe how specific legal, political, and cultural imaginaries take shape, are translated, or encounter resistance within a particular context.

The exhibition unfolds through three permeable categories—Alliance, Representation, and Ownership. They do not function as fixed sections, but as conceptual orientations that allow the works to resonate across different registers. Many of the presented practices move between these dimensions, revealing how legal imagination, ecological struggle, and artistic form are deeply entangled.

“Collaboration means working across difference, which leads to contamination. Without collaborations, we all die”.

A. Tsing

The section *Alliance* brings together works that experiment with forms of interspecies solidarity and shared struggle. In *Cyber Wedding to the Brine Shrimp* (2021), Justyna Górowska, in collaboration with Ewelina Jarosz, Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens, stages a multispecies ceremony at the Great Salt Lake, symbolically marrying Artemia fran-

ciscana. Drawing on ecosexual practices, the work proposes intimacy and ritual as tools to confront ecological collapse and to reframe care as a political gesture. Caitlin Berrigan’s *Life Cycle of a Common Weed* (2007) stages a reciprocal exchange across plants, viruses, and humans. Participants feed their own potentially contaminated blood to dandelions and receive the medicinal root tea in return. By pairing pathogen and weed, the work challenges stigma and medical orthodoxy, proposing an intimate microbiopolitical reciprocity grounded in care and ecological interdependence. Radha D’Souza and Jonas Staal’s *Comrades Against Extinction* (2022) and the introduction to the Court for Intergenerational Climate Crimes (2021) extend alliance into the juridical realm. By staging a speculative court and naming extinct animals as comrades, the works reimagine political communities across species and generations, destabilizing anthropocentric models of justice.

“Technologies of representation trace a fine line between the much-needed redress of injustice done unto others, and the various violences that accompany speaking for them.”

A. Neimanis

Representation addresses the ambivalence of speaking for and with more-than-human entities. Susan Schuppli’s *Can the Sun Lie?* (2014) revisits the evidentiary status of natural phenomena, examining how atmospheric changes in the Arctic disrupt both perception and legal truth claims. The sun becomes not only a witness but a contested producer of evidence. In *A Case of Pluto* (2018-on-going), András Cséfalvay questions scientific classification as a performative act that produces worlds. By proposing the reintegration of Pluto as a planet, the work exposes how consensus and authority shape reality. Jakob Kukula & Leon Lapa Pereira’s *The Diplomatic Suitcase* (2023), developed within the Embassy of the North Sea, mobilizes the format of diplomacy to represent European waters. As a traveling exhibition, it treats water bodies as political actors, testing how institutional language can be reappropriated to foster ecological dialogue.

“The binary contradiction between personhood and property is, however, rather more apparent than real.”

E. Blanco and A. Grear

The works grouped under *Ownership* interrogate property regimes and the historical construction of belonging. Angela Anderson’s *Hexenküche (The Witch Rarely Appears in the History of the Proletariat)* (2021) traces the figure of the witch in Tyrol to reveal continuities between early modern land dispossession and contemporary neo-feudal exploitation.

By linking feminist history and migrant labor, the work uncovers the gendered and extractive foundations of property. Marwa Arsanios’s *Who Is Afraid of Ideology? Part 4: Reverse Shot* (2022) documents attempts to transform a quarry in northern Lebanon into common land. Through collective action and legal experimentation, the project challenges the inevitability of private ownership. Elena Mazzi’s *The Upcoming Polar Silk Road* (2021) situates ownership within geopolitical transformation. Focusing on Arctic infrastructures, the work reveals how ecological change opens new routes of extraction and speculation, where land and sea become objects of strategic competition.

Taken together, these works explore how recognition is created, withheld, or reshaped. *Contracts of Recognitions* treats speculation, fiction, and institutional critique not just as artistic tools, but as ways of engaging in an ecological struggle—one that asks how we might live differently in a more-than-human world.

This exhibition is dedicated to the fragile alliances that remain possible. As you move through these works, we invite you to carry with you a question rather than a conclusion: What would it mean to recognize differently—to notice the infrastructures, languages, and gestures through which worlds are continuously composed? Consider how we inhabit shared spaces, how we relate to what appears marginal, and how we acknowledge interdependence in everyday acts.

Artists bios

·: JUSTYNA GÓROWSKA

is an intermedia artist based in Kraków, Poland. Her practice combines performance, digital technologies, and ecological activism, drawing on art–science research and feminist theory. She explores entanglements between human and more-than-human bodies within planetary water cycle. Górowska holds an MFA from the Performance Art Studio at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków and a PhD from the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Studies program at the University of the Arts in Poznań. Since 2021, she has co-led *cyber_nymphs*, a duo that initiated the hydrosexual movement in art.

·: JAKOB KUKULA

is a multidisciplinary artist whose work explores the shifting relationships between humans, ecology, and emerging technologies. Moving between sculpture, painting, audiovisual installations, design, and research-driven practice, he investigates how environmental systems can be understood as active agents that shape our cultural and planetary imaginaries. His practice builds on this diverse background, interweaving material experimentation, ecological inquiry, sonic exploration and speculative approaches to perception and storytelling. As founder of the SpreeBerlin Initiative and Symbiotic Lab, Kukula develops long-term projects that explore the entanglements between ecological systems, technological infrastructures, and legal imagination. His work engages with emerging Rights of Nature discourses, investigating how rivers and ecosystems might be understood as subjects rather than resources. Through his work he invites audiences to reconsider their role within more-than-human systems, proposing new forms of attention, responsibility and care.

·: ARIS LEON LAPA PEREIRA (HE/HIM)

is a cross-disciplinary performance researcher exploring the boundaries of performative life. Deeply embedded in the landscape of Artistic Research, his personal practice is consistently informed by philosophical inquiry. By merging mechanical and technical knowledge with performative elements, he engages with multiple disciplines with genuine enthusiasm. Currently focused on the de-romanticisation of nature, Leon investigates the Rights of Nature—specifically, the rights of water—in collaboration with the Embassy of the North Sea. Through this partnership, he co-founded the Confluence of European Water Bodies, a growing network of activist organisations that support his research into intercultural relationships and intimate connections with water. Alongside this, he is a curator at the Instrument Inventors Initiative (iii) and co-founder of the WASTELAND Festival, where he leads research and performance curation through an ecological lens. Co-creation and collaboration are not just professional principles for Leon, but also sociological commitments—central to his Resonant Bodies Residencies, where these concepts are deeply explored. For Leon, co-living is a vital practice that is increasingly endangered by today's polycrisis. He is, therefore, continually seeking methods and tools to cultivate honest, careful, and communal environments.

·: SUSAN SCHUPPLI

is a researcher and artist based in the UK. Her fieldwork and documentary film practice is situated at the intersections between environmental struggles, climate science, and affected communities with a contemporary focus on the cryosphere and the politics of cold. Earlier projects examined material evidence from conflict zones to nuclear disasters. Recent films include: *Moving Ice*, *Signals from Svalbard*, *Listening to Ice*, *Gondwana*, *Arctic Archipelago* and *Ice Cores*. Investigations span legal analysis and public advocacy as well as the theoretical reflection and creative exploration in order to understand how the transformations brought about by climate change are generating new forms of evidence. Granting agency to the more-than-human as a material witness informs her efforts at expanding the fields of action and forums for justice. Creative projects have been exhibited throughout Europe, Asia, Canada, and the US. She has published widely within the context of media and politics and is author of the book, *Material Witness* published by MIT Press in 2020. Schuppli is Professor and Director of the Centre for Research Architecture, Goldsmiths University of London where she is also a Fellow and Board Chair of the human rights agency Forensic Architecture.

·: ANDRÁS CSÉFALVAY

is a visual artist, digital storyteller, and mytho-poet from Bratislava, and is also an Associate Professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava. After studying painting and mathematics, he wrote his dissertation on the usefulness and reality of fiction. His work delves into the relationship between culture and technology, and the political and ethical aspects of listening to non-dominant voices in world interpretation. His latest works look at the relationship between astronomers and indigenous peoples in constructing the Mauna Kea telescopes, the flight of dinosaurs as a technology for survival after extinction, and the reclassification of the planet Pluto. He is a recipient of the Oskar Čepan Young Visual Artist Prize, and co-founder of the Digital Arts Platform.

·: RADHA D'SOUZA

is a Professor of Law and former barrister at the High Court of Bombay whose work is shaped by a perspective rooted in the Global South. Her most recent book, *What's Wrong with Rights?*, critically examines mainstream human rights discourse, seeking to repoliticise it within broader struggles for international justice. In her ongoing research project *Where Have Places Disappeared? Corporation-States, Law and Dualist Imaginations*, she argues that European modernity institutionalises a dualism between economy and polity by establishing states and corporations—the founding institutions of capitalism—as distinct legal entities.

·: JONAS STAAL

is a visual artist whose work deals with the relation between art, democracy, and propaganda. He is the founder of the artistic and political organization *New World Summit* (2012–ongoing). Together with Florian Malzacher he co-directs the training camp *Training for the Future* (2018–ongoing), with writer and lawyer Radha D'Souza he founded the *Court for Intergenerational Climate Crimes* (2021–ongoing), and with Laure Prouvost he is co-administrator of the *Obscure Union* (2019–ongoing).

·: ELENA MAZZI

is an Italian artist whose practice investigates specific territories through a research-based approach informed by anthropology. By interweaving local narratives, historical facts, and speculative elements, her work reflects on the relationship between human, natural, and cultural systems, proposing alternative ways of inhabiting and understanding a place. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including at Villa Arson, Castello di Rivoli, Whitechapel Gallery, BOZAR, and the Istanbul Biennial. She has participated in numerous international residencies and is currently undertaking a practice-based PhD at Villa Arson in Nice.

·: ANGELA ANDERSON

is an artist and filmmaker working in the mediums of single and multi-channel video installation, photography, sound installation, sculpture, text work and drawings. Her work questions patriarchal narratives surrounding militarization, the extraction of resources, migration, the climate crisis, gender politics and the relation of humans to the other-than-human. Her work has been shown in exhibitions and festivals internationally, including the *Werkleitz Festival*, *Queer Porto Film Festival*, the *Kyiv Biennial*, *Taxispalais Kunsthalle Tirol*, *Pravo Ljudski Film Festival Sarajevo*, *Tallinn Photomonth Biennial*, *Holbaek Images*, the *2015 Thessaloniki Biennale*, and as co-author in *documenta 14*. She is a candidate in the PhD in Practice Program at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, and teaches at *Kunsthochschule Kassel* and *Bard College Berlin*.

·: CAITLIN BERRIGAN

works as a visual artist, filmmaker, and writer to explore poetics and queer science fiction as world-making practices through moving images, sculptural instruments, and expanded new media. Her early works make sensible the relations across viruses, disability, capitalism and contagion. Her recent artistic research into geological animacies in the climate crisis follows how minerals, toxins, and elemental media are transformed and mobilized by data capitalism and inhuman intimacies. Berrigan's solo exhibitions at *JOAN (LA)* and *Art in General (NY)* were critically acclaimed in *Artforum*,

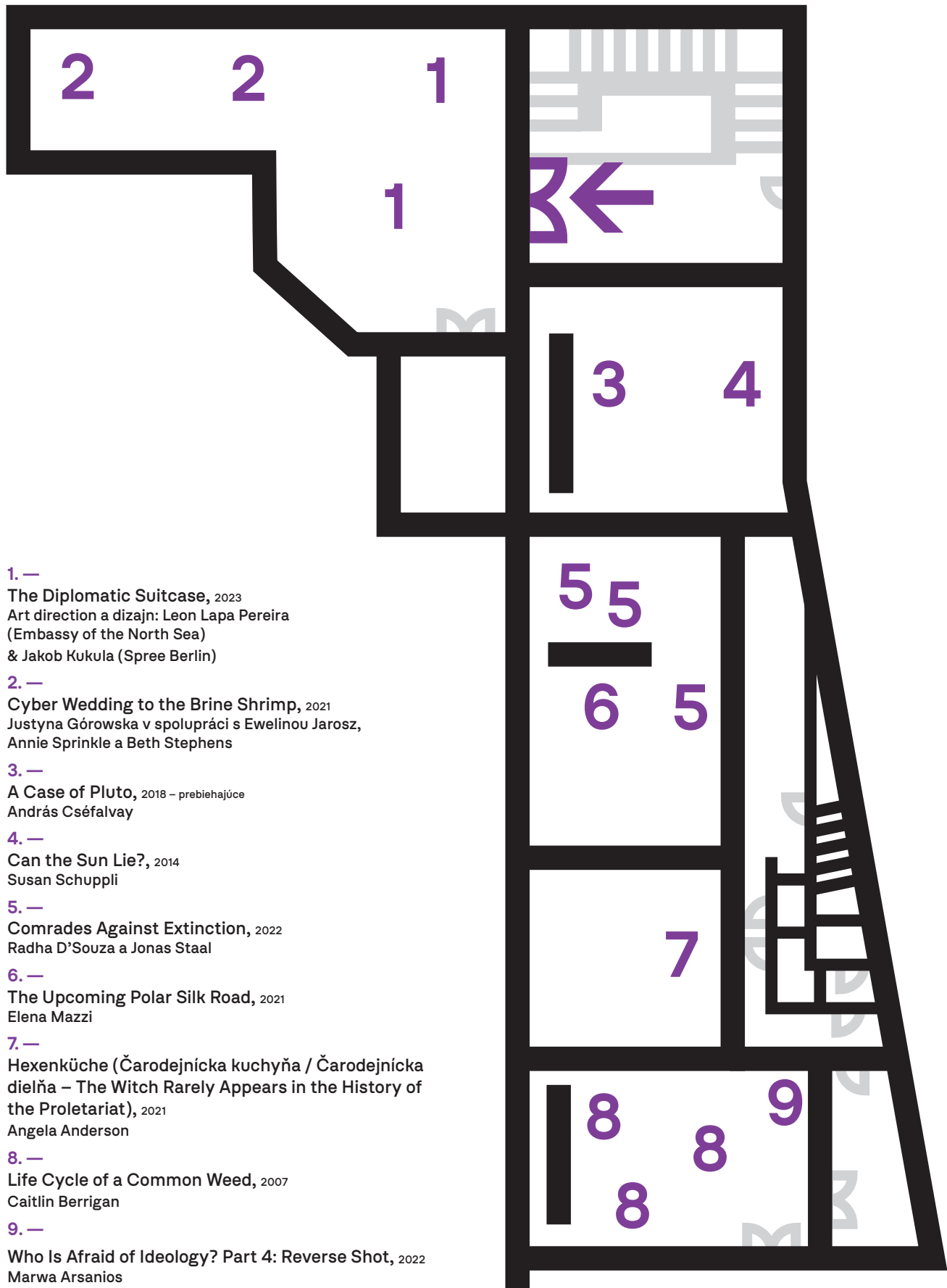
and she has exhibited internationally at the Whitney Museum, Berlinale Forum Expanded, Haus der Kunst Munich, Mudam Luxembourg, Henry Art Gallery Seattle, and Ashkal Alwan Beirut among others. Berrigan has published many essays and artist books, and received awards from Creative Capital, Skowhegan, Humboldt Foundation, Graham Foundation. She leads an artistic research grant at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and has taught at NYU Tisch, Caltech, Bard College Berlin and Harvard.

· MARWA ARSANIOS

is an artist, filmmaker and researcher whose practice addresses structural questions through architecture, collective organization, and moving images. Her work creates spaces within and alongside art institutions to experiment with forms of assembly, commons, and communal life. Over the past decade, she has approached questions of property, law, economy, and ecology from new and historical materialist perspectives, often in collaboration with movements reclaiming land. Focusing on specific sites and the histories of the commons in the Levant, she has recently been involved in the legal communalisation of land in North Lebanon through its transformation into a Mashaa. Her work has been presented in major international exhibitions including documenta 15, the Berlin Biennale, the Venice Biennale, and institutions such as BAK Utrecht, Mosaic Rooms London, and the Hammer Museum. Her films have screened at MoMA New York, Centre Pompidou, and international film festivals. She holds a PhD from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

I Map

Koppel Villa



I Work Titles / Credits

Cyber Wedding to the Brine Shrimp, 2021

Justyna Górowska in collaboration with Ewelina Jarosz, Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens

Life Cycle of a Common Weed, 2007

Caitlin Berrigan

Comrades Against Extinction, 2022

Radha D'Souza and Jonas Staal

Court for Intergenerational Climate Crimes, 2021

Radha D'Souza and Jonas Staal

Can the Sun Lie?, 2014

Susan Schuppli

A Case of Pluto, 2018-ongoing

András Cséfalvay

The Diplomatic Suitcase, 2023

Art direction and design by Leon Lapa Pereira (Embassy of the North Sea) & Jakob Kukula (Spree Berlin)
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Graphic design: Eva van Bemmelen and Corine Datema
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Special thanks to the water bodies of Europe

Hexenküche

(The Witch Rarely Appears in the History of the Proletariat) 2021

Angela Anderson

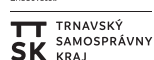
Who Is Afraid of Ideology? Part 4: Reverse Shot, 2022

Marwa Arsanios

The Upcoming Polar Silk Road, 2021

Elena Mazzi

Zriaďovateľ



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