

A SEA

ON EDGE

*For all at last returns to the sea -- to Oceanus, the ocean river,
like the ever-flowing stream of time, the beginning and the end.*

Rachel Carson, *The Sea Around Us*.
1951

A sea on edge presents a series of works that epitomize the interdisciplinary research collaboration that has been taking place in the two years of duration of the international project *A Sea Change*.

Drawing inspiration from the American marine biologist and writer Rachel Carson (*The Edge of the Sea*, 1955), this exhibition aims to develop thoughtful and critical perspectives on the way we interact with the sea and use its resources for economic growth. It seeks to actively participate in discussions encompassing ecological, political, aesthetic, ethical, and scientific aspects, all centered on envisioning the future of the Mediterranean.

A unique transgeographic body of water with a coastline spanning across 22 countries, this “sea enclosed by land”, is not only rich in history and biodiversity, but also carries immense economic and geopolitical significance. Nevertheless, it is now confronting extraordinary challenges that jeopardize its fragile equilibrium and the livelihoods of countless individuals who rely on it.

A hub for cultural and economic activity, supporting over 150 million people living along its coastline, the Mediterranean endures multiple anthropogenic actions, and is undergoing intensive demographic, social, cultural, economic and environmental changes. The sea is changing due to enduring a myriad of human pressures. These include overfishing, cargo shipping (which carries 90% of the goods we consume), mass tourism (accounting for one-third of the world’s total), deep-sea mining, and the installation of underwater telecommunications cables, among others. This array of activities leads to the weakening of the sea, making it vulnerable to pollution, biodiversity loss, seabed damage, the spread of non-indigenous species, marine litter, underwater noise, and the effects of ocean warming and acidification.

A sea on edge allows visitors to reassess their connection with the Mediterranean, fostering a deeper understanding of its diverse dynamics. The artworks on display reveal our interactions with the “Middle Sea” confronting our ‘sea blindness’—a widespread unawareness of maritime issues, that are equally crucial as those on land, whilst exposing the impact of human activities on marine ecosystems and coastal communities, whilst highlighting the often overlooked geopolitical aspects of migrant movements across the Central Mediterranean.

And so, if the sea is on edge perhaps it is time to encourage hope in order to act and repair this vital ocean river. This requires not only reversing current abusive dynamics, but also recognising and managing the seas as a collective resource whose protection and conservation is equally incumbent upon us all. Perhaps the only prospect of well-being for everyone is to manage the seas by applying common principles and encouraging local communities to do the same. We should aspire to cultivate a future where innovative, sustainable practices infuse new life into these waters, revitalizing their essence and safeguarding the ancient ties that link us to this ever-evolving sea.
How much is the sea worth?

This exhibition created and produced by Quo Artis, marks the culmination of *A Sea Change*, an international cooperation project, co-funded by the European Union, between KONTEJNER (HR) as lead partner, MOMus – Experimental Center for the Arts (GR), NeMe (CY), and Quo Artis Foundation (ES) focused on promoting creative innovation around the Blue Economy practices through interdisciplinary and intermedia arts, as well as artistic and curatorial research.

Participating artists:

Helene Black
César Escudero Andaluz
Daniel García Andújar

FRAUD (Audrey Samson & Francisco Gallardo)
Katja Loher
Filippo Minelli
Robertina Šebjanič

AREA 1: MASS TOURISM - LIVING FOR OTHERS

Over the past few years, marine tourism, particularly cruises, has experienced rapid expansion, emerging as the second most significant contributor to income and profits in the blue economy, just behind ocean energy, and ranks as the second-largest source of employment. Concurrently, this growth has posed a notable and evident risk to ocean health and the welfare of local communities.

Shape F/G by Filippo Minelli creatively contrasts the appeal of beauty, usually linked to tourism promotion, against hidden conflicts within the same landscape. Belonging to his series *Silence Shapes*, this series features brightly colored smoke bombs exploding in natural and nondescript environments with a history of conflict, whether military, political, economic, or environmental. In this case, the smoke bomb is set near Capri, and while it enhances the visual appeal of the scene, it also hints at how the smoke used in political demonstrations can also create a silencing effect.

Meanwhile, in *Post Platform: Tracing The Unseen, Drawing The Upcoming*, the workshop curated by Momus and led by artist Nadia Kalara in 2024, students and artists re-envision the Thessaloniki pier as a shared cultural space, employing innovative mapping methods to reveal hidden dynamics and connections between people, space, and the sea. Complementing this, Helene Black's film *Sharing the Sea* documents the environmental and social impacts of tourism and development on local fishing communities in the Famagusta area of Cyprus, highlighting the shared challenges of divided communities.

1.
Filippo Minelli (IT)
SHAPE F/G. De la serie Silence Shapes
2022
Photograph. Pigment print on Hahnemühle Baryta archival paper on Dibond.
170 x 118 cm

Silence Shapes is a series of performances and documentary photography which shows brightly coloured smoke bombs exploding in natural and non-descript

urban environments with an embedded history of conflict, being it military, political, economic or environmental. *Shape F/G* is part of a series developed in the Mediterranean Sea area, in this case Capri.

The smoke bombs lend beauty to the surroundings while at times, they also infuse the landscape with a whiff of danger. The artist was inspired by political demonstrations about how smoke transformed itself into the element silencing the scene. Minelli's images have an ambiguous character; they do not overtly suggest protest or conflict but something less tangible – politics at a more introspective level.

Filippo Minelli works internationally analyzing and researching landscape, politics and communication to create installations and performances documented through photography and video. Drawn towards border zones rather than countries he evolved his practice working with the aesthetics of protests, bringing politics to an anthropological and introspective level by de-contextualizing the use of tear gas, reversing the function of flags, and borrowing from the aesthetics of protest slogans. His work has been exhibited at such venues as the Somerset House in London; the Münchner-Stadtmuseum in Munich; the Total Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul, South Korea; the Triennale di Milano; and the ArtScience Museum in Singapore.
<https://www.filippominelli.com>

2.
Post Platform: Tracing The Unseen, Drawing The Upcoming, Is An Art And Architecture
2024
Installation. Banner: digital print on fabric, 150 x 60 cm
Samsung Galaxy tablet, wall print sticker.

This workshop was integrated into the curriculum of the "Advanced Design: Innovation and Transdisciplinarity in Design" program at the School of Architecture, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, as part of the project *A Sea Change*. This workshop sought to reevaluate the designated pier as a public space along the seaside.

In an effort to discern the challenges, political dynamics, and aesthetic qualities of the location, participants employed various unconventional mapping methods in the studied area. The expectation was for participants to devise their individualized systems to investigate this specific public space, examining invisible activities and imperceptible elements. This involved mapping the transient, the tangible, and the corporeal aspects, all the while considering the symbiotic connections between individuals, the location, and the sea.

Participants: Marina Chatzitoulousi, Theocharis Dospras, Aristidis Georgiadis, Christos Gerotherodoros, Efthimia Kantourou, Chrysa Koulina, Maria Nantsou, Olympia Nazaridou, Athina Tasiou.

Nadia Kalara is a visual artist and architecture professor. Her artwork works like a dialectic between history, landscape and architecture. Ultimately, her work aspires to constitute a comment on the nature and condition of representation. Her work has been exhibited in Greece, Russia, Italy and the U.K. She is currently associate professor in Visual Arts at the School of Architecture of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, having previously taught in the Schools of Architecture of the Universities of Thessaly, Patras and in National Technical University of Athens.

<https://nadiakalara.com/>

MOMUS, Experimental Center for the Arts (formerly: Contemporary Art Center of Thessaloniki) supports contemporary experimental artistic innovations, supports the osmosis and synthesis of arts and interdisciplinary-hybrid relations, keeps abreast of new trends, supports young artists, conducts open invitations, participates in exchange networks, bolsters the mobility of artists and curators through its residency program, and undertakes actions premised on contemporary art interventions in public space.

<https://momus.gr/en>

This section addresses the complex geopolitics and exploitation of marine resources, showing how these factors intertwine the issues of human and maritime exploitation under the shadow of the colonial past. It highlights how unsustainable practices in the oceans often reflect the socio economic injustices and human rights violations suffered by migrant communities.

Daniel García Andújar's site-specific artwork portrays the Mediterranean as a hub of both historical and current journeys and conflicts, intricately intertwining

3. **Helene Black (CY)** *Sharing The Sea* 2023

Single channel video.
23 min

The film focuses on the impacts of tourism and building development upon the environment and livelihood from local fishing. *Sharing the Sea* documents two fishing villages, both in the Famagusta area with each one situated on either side of the dividing green line but sharing the polluted and warming Mediterranean waters. *Sharing the Sea* is a documentary resulting from the long term project *Living with Others* initiated by NeMe as part of the Creative Europe project *A Sea Change*.

Helene Black is an artist, educator and cofounder of the interdisciplinary NGO NeMe. From 1998 until 2013, she focused on the exploration of the inconstancy of memory and questioning the forms in which history, place, and language are proposed as memory. Her works from 2014 until now focus on reprocessing colonialism and about revealing the ingrained and often overlooked contradictions. Not only were political and social histories displaced, but environments, ecologies were ruined, degraded, or exploited. To date, she has sixteen one person shows and numerous group shows both in Cyprus and elsewhere. In addition, on behalf of NeMe, she has curated, organised and project managed exhibitions, conferences, seminars, workshops and open calls.

AREA 2: GLOBAL FLOWS - LOCAL SCARCITY

stories of migration and sea rights. Deriving from his latest series, *Patente de corso* (Letter of Marque), his work presents the Mediterranean as an island, creating a powerful metaphor where the act of plunder becomes the central focus of his investigation. This concept is explored not only in the geographical context through cartography but also refers to the violation of fundamental human rights, denouncing the complex socio-political environment of the region.

Partnerships is an artistic investigation by the duo FRAUD (Audrey Samson & Francisco Gallardo) into the management of maritime spaces, using the European Union's Fisheries Partnership Agreement with Morocco as a starting point and examining its consequences, such as the depletion of fish reserves and local fishing. Situated within a broader framework that explores the genealogy of the European Union's extractive gaze, the work delves into colonial legacies and contemporary challenges in oceanic space management. Some of the elements of the project presented here comprise the video *Unclaimed Latifundium: Eat More, Fish Further!*, created from old news reports from the Francoist period, which exposes the creation of a false myth of modernity marked by the growth of industrial fishing and romanticization of traditional river fishing; and the map *To Reap Without Sowing: Worldwide EU Fishery Partnerships Agreements*, which illustrates the global reach of the European Union in terms of access to marine resources whilst highlighting how contemporary trade alliances perpetuate old colonial connections.

4.
Daniel García Andújar (ES)
Mare Nostrum, al-Bahr al-Mutawasit, Ak Deniz

2023

Digital print on wood.

153 x 305 x 1,8 cm

Mare Nostrum, al-Bahr al-Mutawasit, Ak Deniz invites the viewer to a profound reflection on the Mediterranean Sea, presented not only as a body of water, but as a living entity charged with history, conflict and migration. Belonging to the group of works presented in the exhibition *Patente de corso*, curated by Inma Prieto, the author conducts an extensive research work and historical recovery, offering a perspective that addresses the time and space shared by the civilisations that have inhabited its shores. The work stands out for its ability to appeal to the silences of our past and present, using red on white to represent the complexity, diversity and antiquity of this space. In doing so, his work becomes a visual claim that challenges conventional perceptions of the Mediterranean, inviting a new understanding of its journeys, diasporas and migrations.

Daniel García Andújar is a visual artist, theorist and activist who works and lives in Barcelona. Through interventions in public space and a critical use of digital media and the communication strategies of the corporations connected to it, his theoretical and artistic work oscillates between real (the city) and virtual (the net) territories. He has given and conducted workshops and seminars for artists and social collectives in many countries. His works have been shown in numerous exhibitions around the world, including Manifesta 4 and the 53rd Venice Biennale. The Museo Nacional Centro

Arte Reina Sofía hosted a complete solo show of his work in 2015, curated by Manuel Borja-Villel. In 2017 he participated in documenta14 in Athens and Kassel.

5.
FRAUD
(Audrey Samson y Francisco Gallardo) (UK)
Unclaimed Latifundium: Eat More, Fish Further!

2020

Single channel video.

6:52 min

This audio-video-piece collates several excerpts from NO-DO newsreels related to Spanish fishing and fisheries propaganda under Franco's regime. His agenda was partly disseminated in cinemas through programmes called 'NO-DO', an acronym for Noticiario y Documentales (news and documentaries). NO-DOs were screened prior to films, usually lasting thirty minutes. These cinematographic preambles slowly constructed the myth of francoist modernity, depicting a support of artisanal, local fishing, however all the while supporting industrial fishery development. This eventually exhausted local fishing grounds and propelled the Spanish fleets to extraterritorial water. So much so that Spain during Franco became the third largest fishing fleet in the world. This is a legacy that continues under the EU and the partnerships that the EU negotiates. Some of the companies that were abetted by Franco (such as Pescanova featured in this reel), continue to benefit from these agreements today.

To Reap Without Sowing: Worldwide EU Fishery Partnership Agreements

2020

Installation. Color Ink digital print on textile.

200 x 300 cm

This chart depicts the extent of EU fishery partnership agreements with countries whose waters are of interest to European fishing corporations. Both blue and orange zones show waters in which the EU has the right to fish, clearly showing the colonial legacy of fishing rights. The Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of countries under such partnerships are superposed with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Major Fishing Areas. Covering 35% of the world's seas, and containing 90% of all fish stocks, the codification of EEZs under the 1982 UNCLOS III constitutes the single greatest enclosure in history - an enclosure in which the EU's aquafundium is anchored.

2010 Ex-post Re-evaluation Report

2020

Digital print on bound paper.

34 x 22 cm

This document offers a critical spatial literacy for the EU-Morocco Fisheries Partnerships (currently rebranded as 'Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement'), which was established under the auspices of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement. Every such partnership is preceded by an EU commissioned evaluation report, and supposedly informs decisions taken by EU Parliament. For this case, the report offered a cost-benefit analysis detrimental to the EU, while highlighting the ecological damage to one of the world's most prolific fishing grounds as well as its illegality, because of its inclusion of Western Sahara waters. This revised document is an intervention into opaque EU processes, opening up possibilities for scrutiny and accountability towards the European Union and its extractive practices. It also begs the question, who benefits from the agreements which are neither lucrative for the EU, nor sustainably viable?

Terraqueous Territoriality – A Conversation With Liam Campling

2021

Arxiu d'audio en codi QR:

<https://audioboom.com/posts/7859133-terraqueous-territoriality-a-conversation-with-liam-campling>

This audio piece is a podcast episode of a discussion between FRAUD and Liam Campling which focuses on modes of maritime extraction that continue legacies of colonial rule. Together they explore some of the legal and economic infrastructures that support and perpetuate fishery extraction, such as Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), and Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY), based on Campling's book, co-authored with Alejandro Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea: the Maritime Factor in the Making of the Modern World*. As the EU has the third largest fishing fleet in the world, the majority of which belongs to companies registered in Spain, fisheries become a paramount resource to consider. Like most states, the EU approaches marine natural resources using mechanistic lenses such as input/output

paradigms. This is exemplified in the usage of the word 'stock' to designate populations of fish. Understanding oceanic spaces as resources that can be measured like an inventory exists within a form of marine management which has facilitated the industrial, long-haul fishing responsible for much of today's overfishing.

This conversation delves into the specific tools and agreements that enable overfishing, bringing its logic to the Global South in a gold-rush for resources.

FRAUD (Audrey Samson & Francisco Gallardo) is an artist duo whose work has been exhibited internationally. With their spatial practice, they develop forms of art-led inquiry that examine financialisation through extractive practices and cultivate ways in which we might encourage relations of solidarity which promote the inseparability of land, water and bodies. Somerset House Studios alumni, the duo, currently Stanley Picker fellows, has also been selected for Artangel's Making Time, as well as awarded the HBK Braunschweig Fellowship (2020), the King's College Cultural Institute Grant (2018), and has been commissioned by Contemporary Art Archipelago (2022), the Istanbul Design Biennial (2020), RADAR Loughborough (2020), and the Cockayne Foundation (2018). Audrey is a Professor in More-Than-Computational Arts at l'École de Recherche Graphique. Francisco is an architect who was awarded the Wellcome Trust People Awards (2016) and authored 'Talking Dirty' published by Arts Catalyst (2016). They are Studio Tutor in Architecture at Loughborough University and in Fine Arts at Central Saint Martins. The duo's work is part of the permanent collections of the European Investment Bank Institute (LU) and the Art and Nature Center - Beulas Foundation (SP).

FRAUD's current investigations can be explored through the EURO-VISION platform.

<https://euro-vision.net>

AREA 3: PELAGIC FRAGILITIES

This section of the exhibition emphasizes the ocean's susceptibility to human impact. It delves into the delicate equilibrium of its ecosystems and accentuates the remarkable resilience of life beneath the waves. The displayed works intertwine themes of technolog-

ical dominance, ecological resilience, and the imperative for harmonious coexistence with our planet's vital marine environments. They offer deep insights into critical, yet often overlooked, issues impacting our oceans, examining the complex interplay between

the ocean's communities—both human and non-human—and the pressing environmental challenges they encounter, and whose devastating effects usually go unnoticed.

F.U.C.K.-ID by César Escudero Andaluz proposes a daring statement on technology's grip over our seas. *F.U.C.K.-ID* is a conceptual piece that challenges the status quo of data control and surveillance. Represented by a 3D-printable device designed to sever submarine internet cables, it symbolizes the power and peril of human influence over the pelagic realms. The installation raises crucial questions about the balance of technological advancements and environmental integrity, prompting us to ponder the invisible threads that bind the depths of the oceans to our digitized surface world.

Katja Loher's video sculpture and her *Plankton Manifesto* direct our attention to a colourful underwater world, highlighting the crucial and invisible role of plankton in the marine food chain and the sequestration of carbon. A celebration of microscopic life that highlights the importance of the marine life we do not see.

Finally, Robertina Šebjanič's *Echinoidea Future – Adriatic Sensing* addresses the current biogeological and morphological conditions of the sea urchin's habitat, which has been altered by human-generated liquid waste, leading to decreased oxygen levels in the seawater. Exploring the stressors of the human footprint, the project demonstrates the resilience of the aquatic species. This work acts as an activation of *(sy)(e)mpathia*, a call to recognize and respect the intricate balance of our marine ecosystems through the adaptable power of the life they harbor. The main research was carried out within the Zero Pollution Adriatic residency initiated by the UR Institute in the frame of STARTS4Water and took place in the coastal region of the southern Adriatic.

6. César Escudero Andaluz (ES) *F.U.C.K.-ID. Free Universal Cut Kit for Internet Dissidence*

2017

3D printed sculpture.

Video (1:11 min) on QR Code:

<https://youtu.be/4pXrfqvSYMk>

F.U.C.K.-ID is a stand-alone device designed to cut submarine Internet cables. It can be downloaded in a free .stl format for subsequent 3D printing. In essence, *F.U.C.K.-ID* is an internet stop button. The aim is to give internet users back control over their data and privacy. Why is this device necessary? Because the internet is a medium influenced by political and power dynamics

in which geopolitical actors determine its functioning, its organisation and its control over internet users. This often leads to a situation of oppressive mass surveillance and data interception by governments and large corporations. In this dystopian reality, the *Free and Universal Internet Dissent Cutting Kit* serves as a critical design concept to shed light on the problems of control and surveillance.

How does it work? A diver attaches the device to the underwater cable with screws. Once attached, the natural motion of ocean currents propels the blade over the pendulum that holds the saw. This oscillating motion cuts a 60 mm thick cable over a period of time.

César Escudero Andaluz is an artist focused on digital culture, interface criticism and their social and political effects. César's research addresses issues such as dataveillance, algorithm governance, tactical interface and critical mining. His practices combine interfaces, electronics, images, interactive installations, robotics with critical design, media archaeology and digital humanities. He is a Ph.D candidate and lecturer at the Art and Industrial Design University of Linz (At), at UPV University and the National University of Colombia. He organizes the annual event Sankt Interface.

His artworks have been shown in international electronic-art events, museums and galleries including ARS ELECTRONICA (AT), ZKM (DE) / Nam June Paik Museum (SK), Media Art Biennale in Wrocław (PL), Science Gallery Detroit (USA), Hangar, Centre of artistic production & research (ES) and many more places in Europe and America.

7. Robertina Šebjanič (SL) *Echinoidea Future – Adriatic Sensing* 2021-2022

Installation. Three TVs, seven glass sculptures, sound, 2 speakers. Variable dimensions.

Echinoidea Future – Adriatic Sensing addresses the current biogeological and morphological conditions in the sea urchin environment, which is "aquaformed" by anthropogenic liquid waste, resulting in low oxygen levels in the seawater. Exploring the stressors of the local and global human footprint, the project demonstrates the resilience of the aquatic species. *Echinoidea Future – Adriatic Sensing* acts as an activation of *(sy)(e)mpathia*.

The main research was carried out within The Zero Pollution Adriatic residency initiated by UR Institute in the frame of STARTS4Water. It took place in the coastal region of the southern Adriatic Sea.

Robertina Šebjanič, is an artist whose work explores the biological, chemical, (geo)political and cultural realities of aquatic environments and the impact of humanity on other organisms. Her projects call for the development of empathetic strategies aimed at recognising the other (non-human) entities. In her analysis of the Anthropocene and its theoretical framework, the artist uses the terms "aquatocene" and "aquaforming" to refer to the human impact on marine environments. Her works received awards and nominations at Prix Ars Electronica, Starts Prize, Falling Walls, Re:Humansm 2023. Her art work *Aurelia 1+Hz / proto viva generator* is since 2019 part of the NEWART Foundation collection, Spain. She exhibited / performed at solo and group exhibitions as well as in galleries and festivals: ZKM (Karlsruhe), CCCB (Barcelona), Gallery Cukrarna (Ljubljana), Matadero (Madrid), WRO Biennale (Wrocław), Ars Electronica (Linz), Art Laboratory (Berlin), Eastern Bloc (Montreal), Laboratorio Arte Alameda (Ciudad de Mexico), MSU – Museum of Contemporary Art (Zagreb), MSUB – The Museum of Contemporary Art (Belgrade), MONOM (Berlin), La Gaité Lyrique (Paris) amongst many others.

8.

Katja Loher (CH)

The Hidden Nomad That Nourishes Us.

2023

Multi-channel video composition, 8:08 min, looped
Hand-blown glass sculptures, video screen embedded
in white acrylic case, on/off switch, sound knob.
60 x 60 x 25 cm

This video-sculpture merges the technological with the organic in order to become an instrument of awareness of sustainable change. By mixing hand-made materials with digital technology, this colorful work shows groups of ballerinas that take on the form of small creatures in a game of perspective and scale that ennobles the existence of tiny beings. By using an hypnotic kaleidoscopic realm Loher's and moni-aquatic world playfully reminds us the relevant role of plankton in sustaining life on this planet

Katja Loher is a Swiss visual artist who is celebrated for her captivating video sculptures and installations. Her work is often described as a portal to alternative dimensions where the lines between past, present, and future merge seamlessly. Loher has achieved international acclaim, with her art showcased in museums across countries such as Italy, Russia, China, and the United States. Furthermore, her pieces are part of esteemed collections at institutions like Swissgrid AG, the Perth Concert Hall Museum, and the New Britain Museum of American Art, among others.

A SEA ON EDGE

Critical Horizons of a Resilient Mediterranean

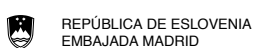
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