

PROJECT CONCEPT

project title: Origin — Earth

Curator: Christine Langinauer

Artist: Lora Dimova

In her work artist Lora Dimova addresses our sense of belonging on a deep and profound level. A longing beyond a specific nation and not defined by borders. Dimova's new body of work Origin – Earth excavates our connection to land and nature. It brings together the practices she has developed over the years in terms of ceramic technique, philosophical thinking and artistic language. Stretched between East and West, North and South, past and future, tradition and modernity, the artist often wonders where she belongs.

Earth is memory, preserving traces from cultures and civilizations now lost. In her research Dimova has focused on the history of Bulgaria, her native land to which she has connected anew from a distance while living in Finland. Her quest has taken her to times gone by when the connection to soil and land was more tangible and reciprocal, whereas today nature has become the backdrop for a stage populated by people. As the environmental philosopher Val Plumwood writes: "Arguably, the distinguishing feature of western culture, and perhaps also the chief mark of its ecological failure, is the idea that humankind is radically different and apart from the rest of nature and from other animals. This idea, sometimes called Human Exceptionalism, has allowed us to exploit nature and people more ruthlessly (some would say more efficiently) than other cultures, and our high-powered, destructive forms of life dominate the planet."

In the age of the Anthropocene, we have ceased to take the earth into account and have become ourselves an organism that no longer gets addressed. In ecological terms every living organism is bilateral, it needs to both send and receive information from other organisms and the surroundings to survive. In her text "How did man become unaddressed?" semiotic Riin Magnus argues that our notion of nature and the rise of technological communication devices has rendered Earth mute for us because we have become both the senders and the recipients of our own messages. How can we repair this broken bond?

In losing our connection with nature we have also lost our ways of being with nature, the habits, rites and rituals that connect us to our environment. With Origin – Earth Dimova wants to help us remember the many ways that we are entangled together. In Sala Tiziano the installation surrounds the visitor in an immersive experience. Elements of nature such as soil, stone, water and the sound of wind and rain are combined with objects of ceramics and porcelain. As the visitor engages in wandering and exploring the work slowly reveals its many details and layers. The installation creates an almost subterranean grotto-like place beyond time and space, reminiscent of ancient sacred places where people used to come together to celebrate their connection with earth. Some of the objects seem to be partly covered with substances similar to fungi or bacteria as if nature has taken them over, whereas some sculptures morph together both human and nature forms.

The installation shows traces of past civilizations, dug up from the ground. In the work Dimova uses references to architecture and classical sculpture. Broken shapes and fragments come together to form an environment reminiscent of a lost land. Cracks, fractures, and imperfections are an inherent part of the work, creating a sense of time as if corrosion and decay would have eaten them away. As with nature and human relationships, ceramics as a material cannot be controlled.

The artworks echoes the architectural forms of Sala Tiziano, the space for the Bulgarian pavilion. The circles, spheres and ellipses repeat the arches of the windows and loggia, the shape of the porcelain and ceramic pieces reflect the old pillars on the walls enhancing the sacral effect of the space. Through this it commemorates the Sala's history as part of a religious location.

Humans have an inherent sense or urge to belong somewhere, to be part of something. This is highlighted in the main exhibition of the Venice Biennale under the title Stranieri Ovunque - Foreigners Everywhere chosen by curator Adriano Pedrosa. We keep striving to reach out and cross the lines of division between us and the rest of the world. However, in today's hectic world we can still end up feeling like outsiders, disconnected and uprooted. To challenge this, Dimova urges us to turn our attention back to Earth and Nature, to our roots.

Bibliography

Magnus, Riin, "How did man become unaddressed?" pp.157-164 in *Semiotics in the Wild: Essays in Honour of Kalevi Kull on the Occasion of His 60th Birthday* Eds. Lindström, Kati, Riin, Magnus, Maran, Timo and Tønnessen, Morten. University of Tartu 2012.

Plumwood, Val 2007

<https://australianhumanitiesreview.org/2007/08/01/human-exceptionalism-and-the-limitations-of-animals-a-review-of-raimond-gaitas-the-philosophers-dog/>

List of works:

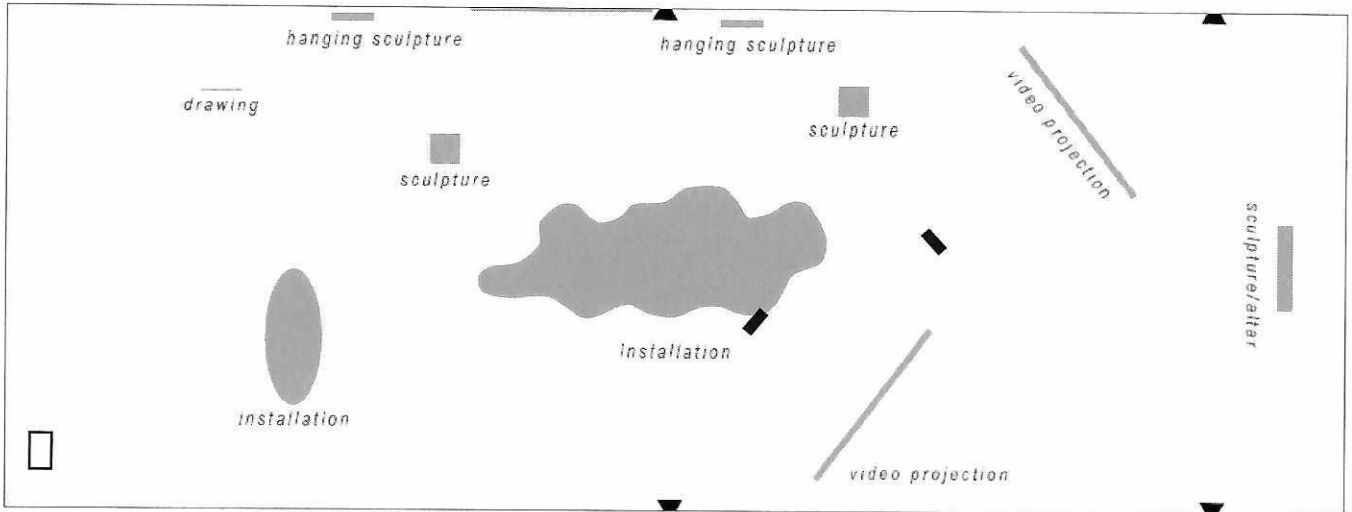
1. installation - stoneware, earthenware, porcelain, sand, stones, soil, wood
approx. size 400 x 250 x 100 cm
2. "Origin-Aether" installation: porcelain, sand, 180 x 100 cm
3. "Oracle I" - hanging sculpture: stoneware, porcelain, glass, wood, metal, 120 x 90 x 15 cm
4. "Oracle II" - hanging sculpture: stoneware, porcelain, wood, metal, 70 x 90 x 27 cm
5. "Entangled" - stoneware, glaze, oxide, 74 x 40 x 25 cm
6. Sculpture - earthenware, 53 x 30 x 46 cm
7. Sculpture - metal, size: 180 x 100 x 10 cm
8. Sculpture - porcelain, metal, glass, marble, 150 x 90 x 20 cm
9. Video projection on transparent screen, screen size: 240 x 135 cm
10. Video projection on transparent screen, screen size: 240 x 135 cm
11. "Echoes from the Earth" 4-channel sound
12. Drawing - coloured pencils on paper, mounted on aluminium, size: 102 x 75 cm

Note: the numbers of the works are indicated in the visual material for reference

VISUAL MATERIALS

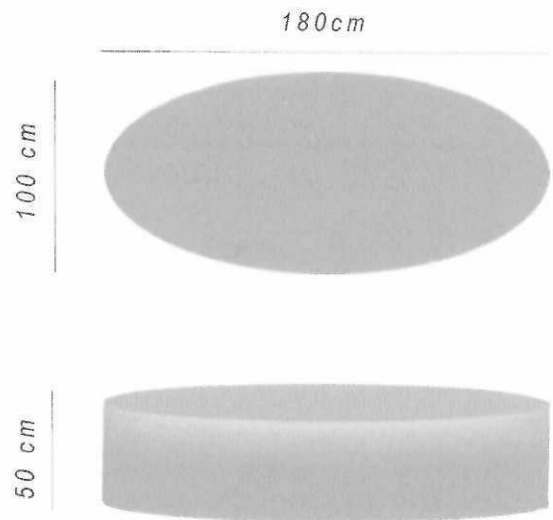
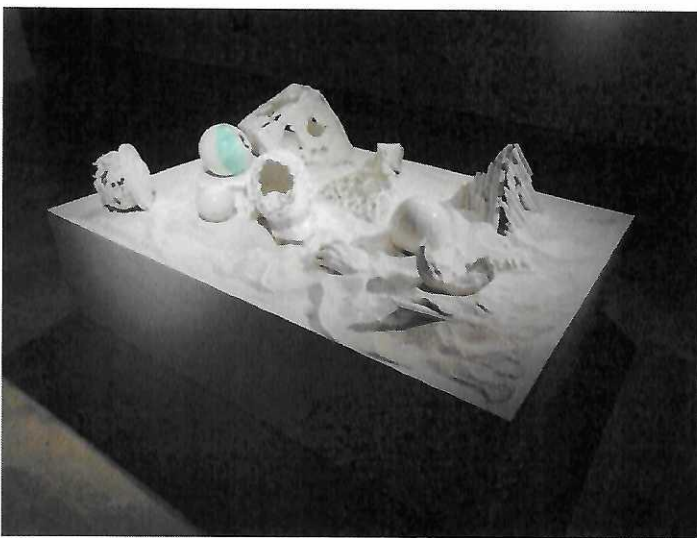


views of the space



- ◀ speakers
- ▬ video projectors
- wooden box with mixer and mp3 players

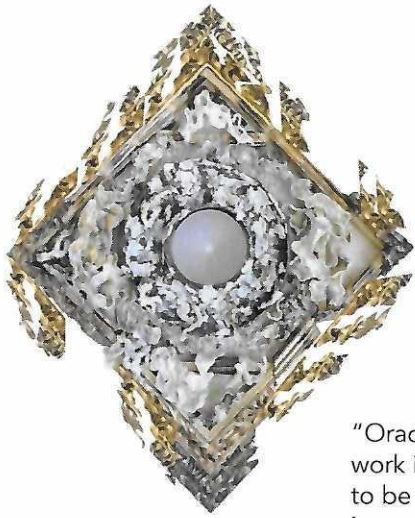
Map of the works positioning in the space



"Origin-Aether" (2) installation, porcelain, sand, 2022
to be positioned on a ellipse-shaped metal (chrome-nickel)
pedestal size 180 x 100 x 50 cm (image on the left)



already made ceramic sculptures to be
used for the central installation (1)



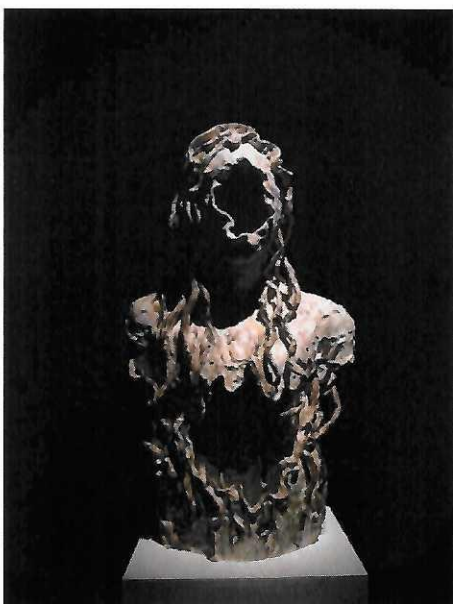
"Oracle I"
work in progress (3)
to be hanged from the ceiling on a metal bar, attached to the ceiling, optional: to additional wall, made for the purpose



"Oracle II" (4)
hanged in the same way as (3)



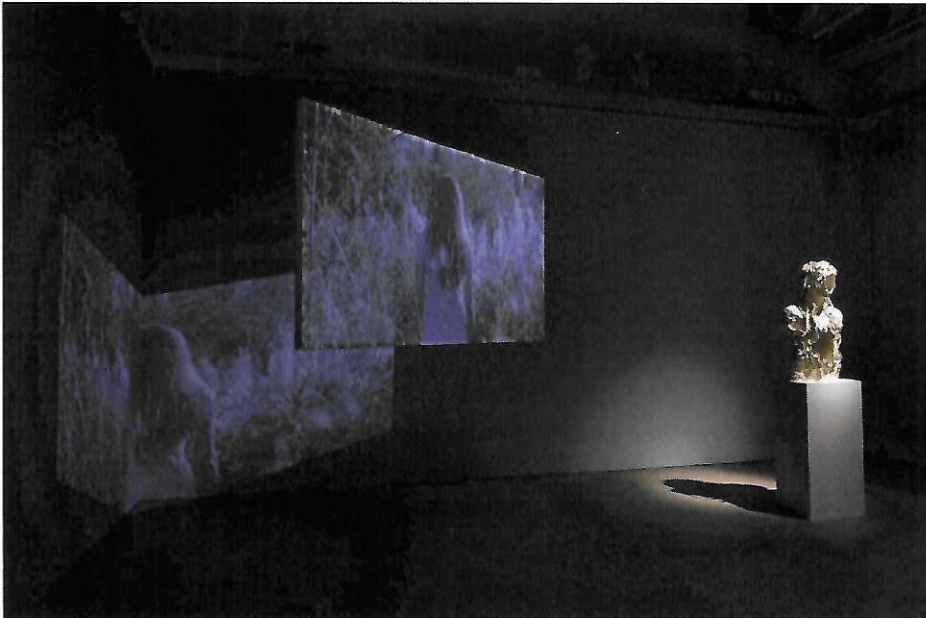
"Entangled" II
work in progress (6)
positioned on a metal pedestal



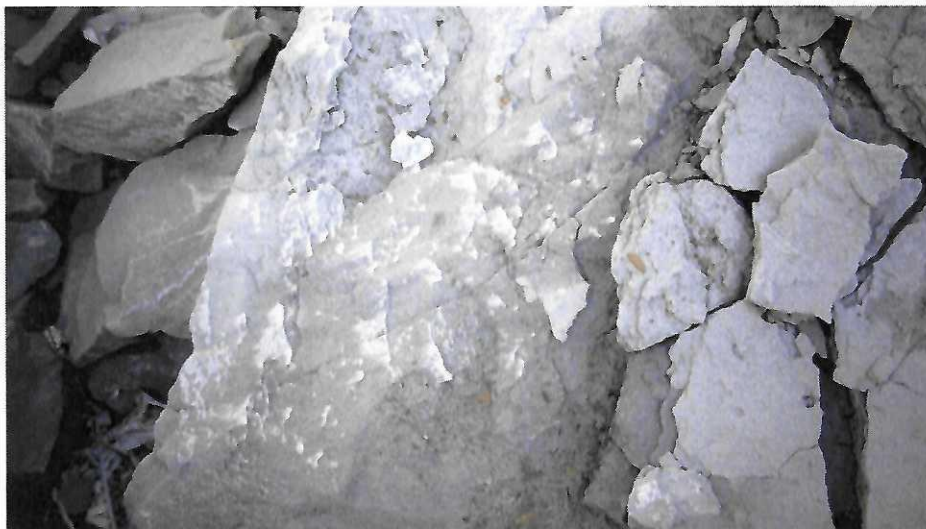
"Entangled"
stoneware, glaze, oxide
74 x 40 x 25 cm
2022 (5) positioned on a metal pedestal



image reference for the metal pedestal



the image shows view from an exhibition at the Helsinki Art Museum, 2022
the video work "Origin" will be included in the installation (9)



screenshot of an upcoming video work, projected on a transparent screen (10)
The video show sceneries from a stone mine near Gabrovo (the hometown of the artist).

The videos will be projected from two projectors, positioned on the ceiling on transparent canvas screens, size 240 x 135 cm.

Sound installation - "Echoes from the Earth" (11)

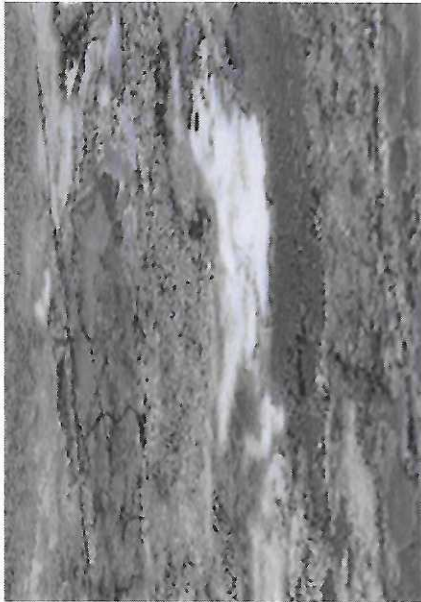
modified sound from water dripping, wind, cracking noise, whispering voice

The sound will run from four mp3 players, connected to the speakers (see map for reference for the position of the speakers). The media players will be connected to a mixer, which will be hidden inside a wooden box. The cables will be hidden behind the metal bars.

The four sounds will be individually audible when the viewer is near a speaker. When in a distance all four sounds will mix and interact with one another.



c-print on transparent textile, covering the windows
size: 18 x 3,57 m
The canvas serves both as visual part of the installation and as a darkening material for the video projections



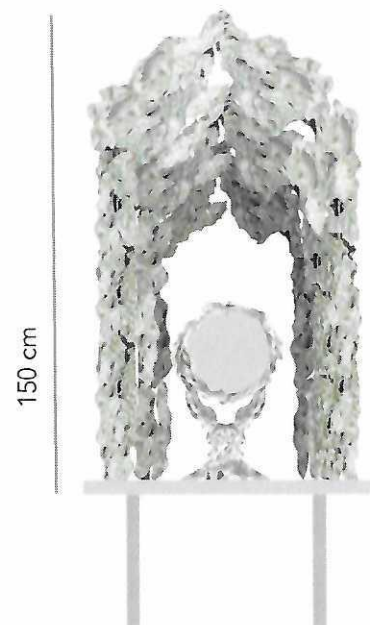
c-print on a transparent canvas
size: 2,20 x 3,50 m
the print is positioned in between the
two hanging sculptures' and hangs from
the metal bar



drawing (12), sketch for upcoming work
coloured pencils on paper, mounted on
aluminium, size: 102 x 75 cm
hanging from the ceiling with metal rope



Visualisation of a work the inner yard (7)
metal basin in an ellipse-shape, filled
with water. Inside are positioned ceramic
pieces. The visualisation does not show
the exact ceramic forms inside the basin.



The visualisation shows the upper part
of a sculpture from porcelain, installed at
the end of the space. (8) The sculpture
will be standing on a metal pedestal.
The work represents an altar with mirror/
reflective surface where the viewers can
see their reflection. It consists of three
layers of metal support frames, on which
the porcelain pieces are attached.