

# CHALEUR

ANNA COLIN  
& CAMILLE RICHERT

## THE HALLMARK OF ITS TIME

39 Since the early 19th century, the various eras we have lived through have carried the name of the new sources of energy we use, from the age of steam and coal, to the age of electricity. We entered the atomic age and we lived through the Glorious Thirty<sup>1</sup> which came to an end with the oil shocks. These “period names”<sup>2</sup> reveal the power of energy in shaping our visions of the world and our time. Many artistic currents appeared along with these new energies and were informed by them: cinema’s impressionist fascination with the puffs of smoke coming out of trains and factories,<sup>3</sup> futurism (1909) and its admiration for the kinetics of machines,<sup>4</sup> André Breton’s surrealist manifesto (1924) comparing creation to electric conduction and rarefied gases,<sup>5</sup> and El Lissitzky’s (1923) constructivist “new man” who inspired Kraftwerk’s (1978) later vision of “man-machine”. The deep fascination exerted by energies on avant-gardes and modern practitioners is backed up by abundant evidence and their appeal has constantly been validated by their way of marking artistic movements.

Today, these large-scale periods can no longer withstand a vaster transformation of an era. If the 17th century saw a major cosmological revolution

- 1 Translated from the *Trente Glorieuses*, a term referring to the thirty years of economic growth in France, from 1945 to 1975.
- 2 Dominique Kalifa (ed.), *Les Noms d'époque*, Paris, Gallimard, 2019.
- 3 Sylvie Ramond (ed.), *Impressionnisme et naissance du cinématographe*, exhibition cat. (Lyon, Musée des beaux-arts, 15 April–18 July 2005), Lyon, Fage, 2005; Philippe-Alain Michaud, *Sketches. Histoire de l'art, cinéma*, Paris, Kargo et l'Éclat, 2006.
- 4 Author of the the *Manifesto of Futurism*, 10 years later Filippo Tommaso Marinetti took part in writing another manifesto, the one by the *Italian Fighting Bands*, also known as the *Fascist Manifesto*: his pictorial fascination for movement and machines was reinforced in a populist and extremist form of rationalism.
- 5 Douglas Kahn (ed.), *Energies in the arts*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2019, p. 11.

6 Frédérique Aït-Touati, Alexandra Arènes and Axelle Grégoire, *Terra Forma. Manuel de cartographies potentielles*, Paris, B42, 2019; Frédérique Aït-Touati and Jean Jouzel, “Climat: quelle culture pour quel futur?”, conference, Paris, Centre Pompidou, 2 December 2022.

7 According to the definition put forward by the IGN, the Anthropocene is “a neologism constructed from the ancient Greek ἀνθρωπος (anthropos, ‘human being’) and καινός (kainos, ‘new’), in reference to a new era in which human activity has a significant and global impact on planetary ecosystems. Beginning in the late 18th century with the Industrial Revolution, according to the Dutch Paul Crutzen, Nobel Prize winner in chemistry, and the American Eugène Stoermer, it followed the so-called Holocene period as a new geological era.”, cf. IGN, *Cartographeur L’Anthropocène. Atlas IGN, Changer d’échelle pour pouvoir agir*, Paris, Institut national de l’information géographique et forestière, 2022, p. 3 [URL: [https://www.ign.fr/publications-de-l-ign/institut/kiosque/publications/atlas\\_anthropocene/2022/atlas.pdf](https://www.ign.fr/publications-de-l-ign/institut/kiosque/publications/atlas_anthropocene/2022/atlas.pdf)].

8 Published by éditions Flammarion in 1993.

9 Marielle Macé, *Sidérer, considérer. Migrants en France*, 2017, Lagrasse, Verdier, 2017, p. 26.

10 “Anthropocène”, *Géococonfluences*, September 2017 [URL: <http://geoconfluences.ens-lyon.fr/glossaire/anthropocene>]; for a historical synthesis of the Anthropocene, see Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, *L’événement anthropocène*, Paris, Seuil, 2013.

11 Julie Le Gall, Olivier Hamant and Jean-Benoît Bouron, “Notion en débat: Anthropocène”, *Géococonfluences*, September 2017 [URL: <http://geoconfluences.ens-lyon.fr/informations-scientifiques/a-la-une/notion-a-la-une/anthropocene>].

12 Paul Crutzen, “Geology of mankind”, *Nature*, 2002, vol. 415, n° 6867, p. 23.

thanks to the theories of Galileo and Kepler, the last few decades have seen another one unfold.<sup>6</sup> Called the Anthropocene,<sup>7</sup> it is also an era of new mentalities that demand we revise the modern relationship between human domination and extractivism towards living and non-living things, and that we think in terms of their co-dependency rather than in terms of their competing with each other. From the outset, the scale of this revolution in thought was able to stand up to the criticism and resistance that thinkers of the Anthropocene were faced with well before their time. And so, in 1974, the British climatologist James Lovelock began writing *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth* (1979) in which he developed a hypothesis that he had first explored with the microbiologist Lynn Margulis, whereby the Earth is the total sum of millions of organisms that co-evolve to support the environment and maintain life.<sup>8</sup> These ideas were contested for they disrupted the theory of natural selection, and to this day they have not been fully validated. The disturbance generated by the Anthropocene has never ceased to challenge the way we consider the world, and to ask us to apprehend it with what the essayist Marielle Macé calls “this disposition that combines our vision (examination with our eyes or thoughts) and respect”.<sup>9</sup>

The start date of the anthropogenic era has never been fixed:<sup>10</sup> some suggest it began around -10,000 BC, in the Neolithic period when nomadic hunter-gatherers were replaced by sedentary populations.<sup>11</sup> Others, like the meteorologist Paul Crutzen, evoke the year 1784, when the engineer James Watt registered the patent for the steam engine,<sup>12</sup> while the mid-20th century is frequently cited as the time of an acceleration of processes sparked by industrialisation (concentration of greenhouse gases, construction of dams, widespread extinction of animals, accelerated deforestation, etc.).<sup>13</sup> Although its precise origins cannot be agreed on, the Second World War and the 1947 Marshall Plan acted as catalysts in the industrialisation of production techniques, exploitation and consumption, and contributed to pushing climates towards a growing disequilibrium.

Warning signs of the forthcoming perils of energy started to become apparent in the post-war period. The Great Smog of London in 1952 was one of the first health crises visible to the naked eye since the disaster

at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In 1956, the American geophysicist Marion King Hubbert announced an imminent plateau in oil production due to the finitude of resources. In 1962, the American biologist Rachel Carson noted, in *Silent Spring*, the perverse effects of the agricultural insecticide known as DDT. But it is in 1972 that alarm bells truly started ringing for international awareness.<sup>14</sup> In the final year of the carefree Glorious Thirty, the first Earth Summit was held in Stockholm, the Club of Rome and the editors of *The Ecologist* respectively published a report and a manifesto on the finitude of resources. That same year, while the use of chlordecone was authorised for banana plantations in Guadeloupe and Martinique, DDT was banished in the United States of America, and NASA provided the first complete image of the Earth as seen from space. 1972 closed the gap between extremes of scientific alarm bells, new major environmental pollution and never-before-seen images of the Earth, allowing us to fully grasp its immensity. This date alone reveals the contemporaneity of denial and evidence, of climatic carefreeness and cause for concern.

41 For all these reasons, the Dunkirk Art and Industry Triennial takes this date as its starting point to journey through the subsequent five decades. The exhibition looks at artistic, architectural, landscaping and design practices that have concerned themselves with the question of energy, its usages and misuse, and its potential narratives, both fantastical and critical. The show covers debates, subjects of curiosity, preoccupations, obsessions and convictions of contemporary cultural practitioners in France, the United Kingdom, Belgium and the Netherlands. This transnational space, with Dunkirk at its centre, is used as a sample for observing and understanding environmental change and the way it affects artistic production. The LAAC and the FRAC, whose architecture is intertwined with the history of industrial activity had, as early as 1982, a ringside seat in terms of both the economic and environmental changes in the region, and the economic and migratory flux it has experienced and continues to experience today.<sup>15</sup> And so, the exhibition, entitled *Chaleur humaine*, bears the hallmark of its time.

## ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCE

The chosen title not only evokes the global warming resulting from human activity and the fossil economy, but also the system of personal and shared solidarity and unison. The expression *chaleur humaine* conjures up a multitude of images,

13 Clive Hamilton and Jacques Grinevald, "Was the Anthropocene anticipated?", *The Anthropocene Review*, 2015, vol. 2, n° 1, p. 59–72.

14 François Jarrige and Thomas Le Roux place the amplification of resistance to pesticides in civilian society, automobiles and the consumer society around 1968, cf. François Jarrige and Thomas Le Roux, *La contamination du monde. Une histoire des pollutions à l'âge industriel*, Paris, Seuil, 2017, p. 319.

15 Victor Vanoosten, "Le musée autrement. Gilbert Delaine et le musée d'art contemporain de Dunkerque. Histoire d'une utopie sociale et artistique conçue au cœur de l'industrie, 1974–2013", thesis, Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris, 2022.

memories and scenarios, far beyond the temporal framework of the exhibition. From sharing warmth, a costly commodity, during evening gatherings around a hearth in the Middle Ages,<sup>16</sup> to the camaraderie of miners in the face of underground dangers and in their trade union battles, through to mutual aid when faced with tornados, flooding, forest fires and heatwaves in the 2020s or, furthermore, the climatic and anti-dystopic fictions of Octavia Butler (the *Xenogenesis* trilogy, 1987–1989), *Starhawk* (*The Fifth Sacred Thing*, 1993) or Kim Stanley Robinson (*The Ministry for the Future*, 2020).

16 Olivier Jandot, *Les Délices du feu. L'homme, le chaud et le froid à l'époque moderne*, Seyssel, Champ Vallon, 2017.

Putting together an exhibition on the theme of energy might seem to be vain when faced with the foregone conclusion of global warming, the urgency of decisions that need making and the need for behavioural changes. Artists, nonetheless, could well have a role to play in making this happen through their capacity to give form to this upheaval. “Blue Marble”, a photograph of the Earth seen from space taken by astronauts on the Apollo 17 mission in 1972, was unfortunately unable to give us a better understanding of our planet.<sup>17</sup> Our survival is dependent on the critical zone, the slim surface where living things, air, the ground and underground interact, but we still do not know how to represent it. Temperatures are gradually surpassing 1.4, 1.5, even 1.6 °C of those of the pre-industrial era, but we have arguably not succeeded in making this increase visible.<sup>18</sup> The difficulty of imagining the state of the Earth in order to actually feel it is probably part of the

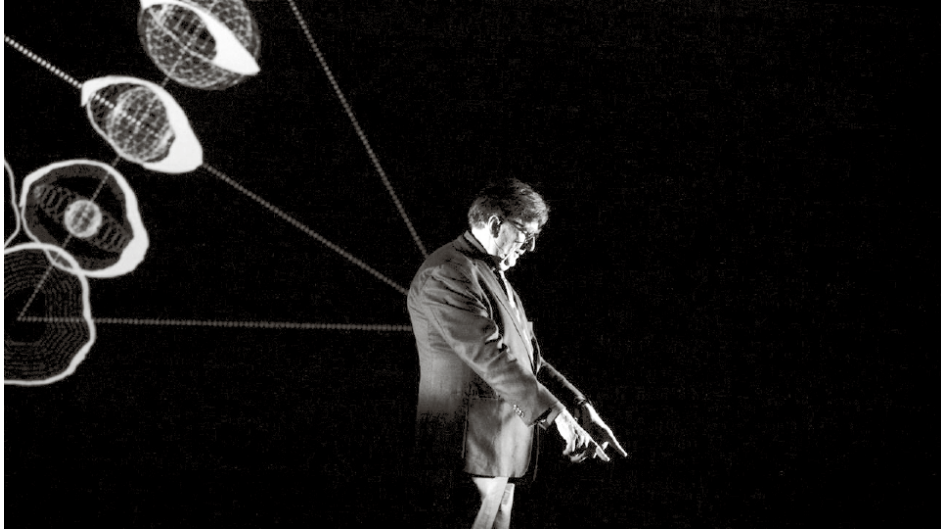
17 Aït-Touati, Arènes and Grégoire, 2019, cited n. 6.

18 Aït-Touati and Jouzel, 2022, cited n. 6.

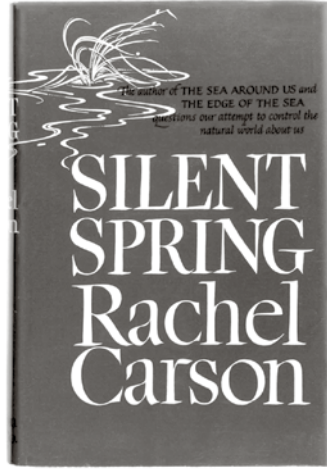
problem. According to the philosopher Bruno Latour and the historian of literature and modern science Frédérique Aït-Touati, one of the main levers for acting in favour of the environment lies in influence. How can we be influenced and influence someone else on the subject of climate? One of the solutions envisaged was to imagine artistic forms of the critical zone. The conference-performances *Inside* and *Moving Earths* in 2019 at the Théâtre des Amandiers in Nanterre, and then the exhibition curated by Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel at the ZKM in Karlsruhe, invited us to stop looking at the Earth as a space we live in, but instead as a space we are evolving in.<sup>19</sup> Taking as its starting point the idea that the anthropogenic era requires an evolution of both mental and visual representations to meet the challenge, the second edition of the Dunkirk Art and Industry Triennial brings together a broad range of practices in order to look differently at and better apprehend the current situation, its history and its urgency.

19 Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel, *Critical Zones: The Science and Politics of Landing on Earth*, exhibition cat. (Karlsruhe, Zentrum für Kunst und Medien, 23 May 2020–28 February 2021), Karlsruhe, Zentrum für Kunst und Medien, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2020.

To highlight the evolution of these representations up to the current day, a significant amount of historical work was carried out



Bruno Latour and Frédérique Ait-Touati, *Inside*, 24 November 2018, KAAI Theater.

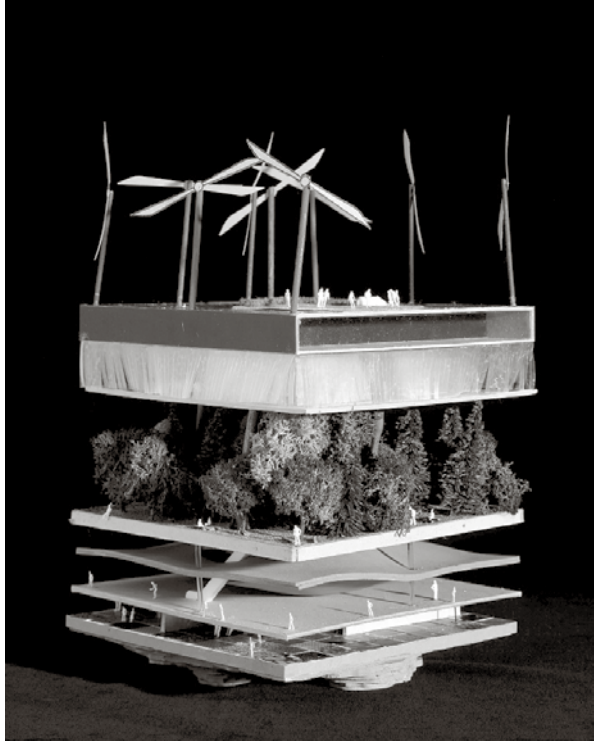


Cover of the first edition of *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson, 1962.

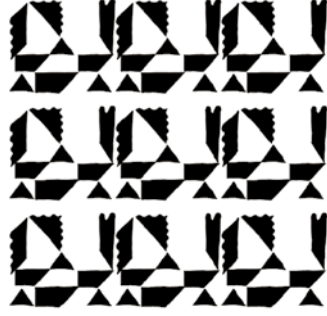
Jean-François Krebs, sketch for Guérit-Tout, 2023, courtesy of the artist.



MVRDV, Maquette du Pavillon des Pays-Bas pour World Expo'2000, Exposition Internationale de Hanovre, Allemagne, Projet réalisé, 1997-2000, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Musée national d'art moderne - Centre de création industrielle.



Yemi Awosile, pattern study for Forty-seventh Samsara, 2023, courtesy of the artist & Rubis Mécénat, 2023.



as part of our curatorial work, with help from the Centre Pompidou and the Centre National des Arts Plastiques who were kind enough to give us access to their modern and contemporary collections. Other public collections – regional, national and international museums, including the Frac Grand Large – Hauts-de-France and the LAAC in Dunkerque – as well as loans from artists, have completed this panorama of relationships between art and energy. Although it is atypical for a Triennial to construct a large part of its discourse from a collection of public works, this was a conscious decision on behalf of the artistic directors and created an opportunity: that of understanding the importance of this theme in the policies of public acquisitions over the last five decades. How to recount the history of art and energy through collections? How to fill in the gaps of gender-biased and Western-centred narratives? How to account for recent developments in terms of the relations of our civilisation to energy and its planetary repercussions? These are some of the questions that guided the curatorship of *Chaleur humaine*.

45

The Triennial has also been an opportunity to commission new artworks, for both public and exhibition spaces, directly resonating with current issues and concerns. Although the exhibition does not intend to be exhaustive, it offers a survey of representative practices of energy awareness since the 1970s that invite us to think about anthropic responsibility in the current state of the world, thus thwarting any playing down of the role of human beings in global warming. Room has also been made for works that engage vernacular beliefs and rites of celebration and care for living things,<sup>20</sup> for instance by Gina Pane, Lois Weinberger, Mercedes Azpilicueta or Eden Tinto Collins. By re-writing Cartesian representations of the world, they have the same ecological object in mind: to influence us.

20 Just as Douglas Kahn underlines the spread of beliefs and the influence linked to energies, cf. Kahn, 2019, cited n. 5.

## PRINCIPLES AND METHODOLOGY

Wherever possible, *Chaleur humaine* has been designed around principles and methodologies in keeping with its discourse and themes, starting with the curatorial research itself, carried out with the invaluable help of Henriette Gillerot, curatorial assistant. This started with an exploration of the collections at the Centre Pompidou and the Centre National des Arts Plastiques, partners of the Triennial, as well as with conversations with the curators at these institutions. The loans represent approximately two thirds of the works shown in the exhibition. Its eight chapters were gradually constructed around findings in the collections. These include works of art and design objects or models, conceptually or formally linked to the themes that became prominent in the research process: oil, nuclear energy, landscape,



bodies at work, exhaustion, cars, pollution, recycling, sustainability, and the future. The year 1972 was also part of this research: what were artists, architects and designers working on during this pivotal year?<sup>21</sup> What were their preoccupations at the end of the Glorious Thirty? What materials were they using?

21 For an insight into the influence of the petrol crisis on architecture, design and cultural history of the 1970s, see Mirko Zardini and Giovanna Borasi (ed.), *Sorry, Out of Gas: Architecture's Response to the 1973 Oil Crisis*, exhibition cat. (Montréal, Centre canadien d'architecture, 7 November 2007–20 April 2008), Montreal, Centre canadien d'architecture, 2007.

22 Camille Morineau (ed.), *Elles@centrepompidou: Women Artists in the Collection of the Musée national d'art moderne, Centre de Création Industrielle*, exhibition cat. (Paris, Centre Pompidou, 27 May 2009–21 February 2011), Paris, Centre Pompidou, 2009.

Collections from the 1970s to the 2010s are largely dominated by male artists and, more generally, diversity and inclusion had little part to play in the acquisitions of this period.<sup>22</sup> To re-establish the balance, research was led into collections that are sensitive to these questions, in particular that of 49 Nord 6 Est – Frac Lorraine, and when searching for artists, the focus was placed on equality and diversity. A conscious choice was made to invite a majority of women and minority artists to develop projects for the exhibition and public spaces, often giving them their first public commission. Including non-gendered and non-western-focused

perspectives and narratives on the theme of energies thus became a key concern of the curatorial work. For all that, the ratio between women/men/non-binary, BIPOC/non-BIPOC, and disabled/non-disabled remains unbalanced.

Another subject of careful consideration was the project's carbon footprint, be it at the level of research travel (to France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Great Britain) or transport of works. The Triennial's environmental responsibility further extended to the production and display of artworks, the catalogue and the website. The provenance and sustainability of the materials used, the works' afterlife (recycled, transported, destroyed or stored?), the distance travelled by the artists and the type of transport used for research trips and production were a key focus of discussion with participating artists. As much as possible, the Triennial worked with the existing layout of the rooms, reducing the building of walls and rooms to the bare minimum. When walls were erected, recycled material from previous exhibitions were used, and display cases and plinths were used from an existing stock.

The graphic design studio, In the shade of a tree, rolled out a series of graphic principles inspired by low-tech culture such as separating the images from the text, and colour from black and white, or using the whole surface of a sheet of paper. Their proposals minimised production time and costs and avoided wasting materials, without sacrificing accessibility, quality and the reproduction of images. Printing on recycled paper to ensure the production of a *catalogue raisonnable*, but also creating a low-carbon internet site<sup>23</sup> with fair data hosting was also part of the approach of the studio to meet the values

23 Made in collaboration with the designer Erik Hartin.

foregrounded in *Chaleur humaine*. Changeable and seemingly conditioned by the fluctuating temperature throughout the three seasons of the Triennial, the typography for *Chaleur humaine* blurs as summer approaches and its background colour, inspired by thermographic maps, becomes more yellow and red. In the autumn and then winter, it becomes sharper again, turning green and blue.

Finally, *Chaleur humaine* has favoured local entanglements, circularity and solidary networks, bringing together education and healthcare practitioners, and knowledge and cultural producers. Residencies and projects have notably taken place alongside children and in collaboration with them (Io Burgard with the Maisons des Enfants de la Côte d'Opale in Saint-Martin-Boulogne and Zoé Philibert with the CMP pour Adolescents “Les 400 Coups”); with students, young people and adults in partnership with Esä, the École Supérieure d'Art de Dunkerque-Tourcoing (Yemi Awosile and Hugh Nicholson), the ESAT – Ateliers du Littoral de Tétheghem and the Foyer d'Accueil Médicalisé du Relais des Moères (Tiphaine Calmettes); at the Café des Orgues in Herzelee (Mathis Collins), in a wine warehouse in Dunkirk (Jean-François Krebs) as well as in the 4Écluses concert venue in Dunkirk.

## 250 WORKS FROM THE ANTHROPOCENE

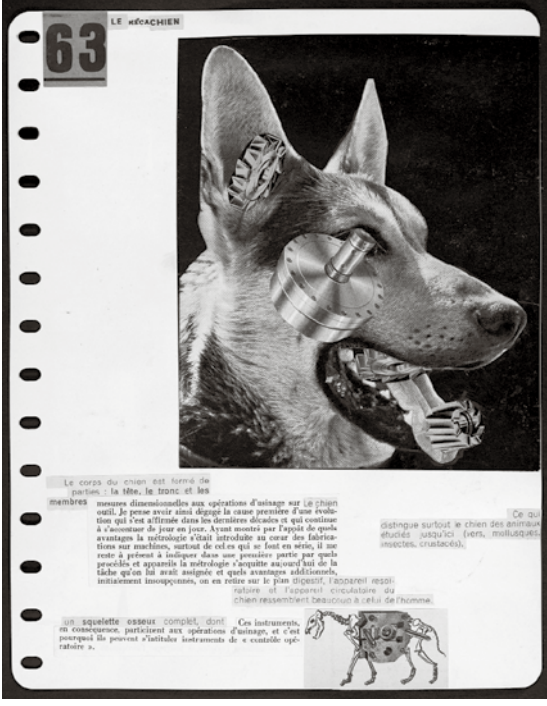
47

*Chaleur humaine* takes place at the Frac Grand Large — Hauts-de-France, at the LAAC museum, in the Halle AP2 and in public spaces around Dunkirk with over 250 works presented in eight themed chapters, designed as autonomous yet complementary entities.

### THE SOURCES OF PROGRESS

The Triennial opens with one of the historical functions of energy: being the modern cog in the wheel of progress. This notion, the focus of an essay by François Jarrige in this catalogue, has led to both the development and the accumulation of energy sources since the 19th century. The works on show testify to the diversity of energy sources available since the Glorious Thirty: among them are the sun celebrated by Guy Rottier, wind power experimented by the architecture studio MVRDV, hydraulic energy magnified by Toshio Shibata, gas and nuclear power stations seen from the sky by Jacques Bernard, the smoke from coal combustion documented by Gabriele Basilico and electricity as historicised by Gregory Kalliche.

The progressist value associated with energy has nevertheless been accompanied by criticism both from scientists and artists since the 19th century. Not only were these renewed in terms of decolonisation – as the work of Otobong Nkanga and Sammy Baloji addresses –,



Erró, Untitled, from *Mécaosciences pour le mécacours moyen, le cours supérieur et les classes de 8<sup>e</sup> et 7<sup>e</sup> des lycées et collèges*, circa 1962, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Musée national d'art moderne - Centre de création industrielle.

Élise Carron et Fanny Devaux, models for *I'm late*, 2022, courtesy of the artists.



Jo Spence, *The Highest Product of Capitalism (After John Heartfield)*, 1979, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Musée national d'art moderne - Centre de création industrielle.

but they were also at the origin of dangers for all living things. While Susan Schuppli retraces the negligent decision-making that amplified the nuclear catastrophe at Chernobyl, the video artist Natacha Nisic has tried to capture a 360° view to show the extent of the damage caused by the Fukushima disaster.

These works attest to the diverse positions of practitioners vis-à-vis progress and its sources, which are discerned through the variety of registers used to represent them. While some capture the so-called sources of progress from an objective distance (Sophie Ristelhueber), others contribute to aestheticising them (Claude Parent), transcending them (Öyvind Fahlström), denouncing them (Hans Haacke) or highlighting their absurdity (Hortense Soichet). Together, these works reveal both the fascination and the fear provoked by energy, its potential, its consequences and its depletion.

#### TIRELESS BODIES

The concern with exhaustion first reared its head in the 19th century, when an obsession with tiredness emerged across industrial societies. A fixation which, according to the historian Anson Rabinbach, was anchored in a vision of the body as a thermodynamic machine, whose expenditure of energy should be optimised as much as possible.<sup>24</sup> This notion was long-lasting, as can be seen in paintings by Edmund Alleyn whose bodies, pervaded by electronics, evoke cyborgs, but also Erró's mechanical-animal hybrids and Ettore Sottsass' ergonomic desks. Whether it's an ashtray designed by the latter or the filter coffee machine coloured by Jean-Philippe Lenclos, energising substances are also rendered attractive, testifying to this dream of incessantly increasing human energy.<sup>25</sup>

However, many signs of exhaustion are revealed in pieces from the same period. They reflect the new unease of the second half of the 20th century described by the historian Georges Vigarello: not just physical but also mental fatigue.<sup>26</sup> One perceives it in Chris Burden's paradoxically painful performance where he rested for twenty interminable days, or in the chaise by Archizoom whose canvas is so taut that it is at odds with its primary function. The flags commissioned by Élise Carron and Fanny Devaux fit into this critical tradition of hyperactivity by creating banners of laziness, lateness and detachment.

The ideal of fatigue reduced to a bare minimum implicitly highlights the greater value given to youth in contemporary societies: artists, like Ewa Partum or Jo Spence, lend their bodies to experiences

49

24 Anson Rabinbach, *Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue and the Origins of Modernity*, New York, Basic Books, 1990.

25 Jonathan Crary, *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*, London, New York, Verso, 2013; Beatriz Colomina, "The 24/7 Bed", in Marina Otero Verzier and Nick Axel (eds.), *Work, Body, Leisure*, exhibition cat. (16th International Architecture Exhibition, Venice, Dutch Pavilion, 26 May–25 November 2018), Rotterdam, Het Nieuwe Instituut, Berlin, Hatje Cantz, 2018, p. 189–204.

26 Georges Vigarello, *Histoire de la fatigue. Du Moyen Âge à nos jours*, Paris, Seuil, 2020.

relative to the double affliction of old age and the gender of ageing. Made between the 1960s and 1980s, the historical pieces presented in this chapter bear witness to a relentless productivist state of mind, often maintained to the detriment of the health of humans and other living things.

#### HUMAN RESOURCES

As support or substitutes for the force of the body, sources of energy have not ceased to multiply since the post-war period, reducing effort, accelerating growth and contributing to human comfort. For all that, they do not entirely replace certain bodily, physical, personal or mental energies needed to achieve societal wellbeing. This chapter looks back on what human resources are in order to reflect on the forces that animate us. Those forces that machines and technology cannot replace.

During the demonstrations of 1 May 1972, in a performative act to purge societies of their ideologies, Joseph Beuys and two of his students swept Karl Marx Square in West Berlin and picked up rubbish from the protest march in plastic bags with the logo for the Organisation for Direct Democracy, a movement recently created by the artist. To do or not to do: the strength we draw from convictions and social and political commitment shows how energy (often super-human, sometimes transgressive) has been deployed for improved, shared and viable life projects for generations to come. Drawings, publications and photographs by Ellen Lesperance and Pauline Hisbacq testify to the power of the pacifist struggles led between 1981 and 2000 by the ecofeminist collective Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp against the installation of nuclear missiles in England.

The installation *difé* by Minia Biabiany evokes yet another struggle, one that began in the 1970s and is still ongoing, this time in

relation to chlordecone, the pesticide responsible for poisoning the land and the inhabitants of Guadeloupe.<sup>27</sup>

As silent witnesses of the devastating effects, banana tree sculptures made from burnt wood punctuate this burial ground that refuses to forget. Faced with the necessity of repairing the world and inverting its

models, Jane Dark, Eden Tinto Collins' alter ego from the web, draws its force from afrofuturism, magic, music and introspection in a series of satirical videos on our ritualised usage of virtual space. On the other side of the screen, in the courtyard of the Foyer d'Accueil Médicalisé du Relais des Moères, another ritual has been taking shape over the last few months: led by Tiphaine Calmettes, the collective creation of a bread oven with chimeric forms has become the epicentre of future encounters.

<sup>27</sup> See Malcolm Ferdinand, *Decolonial Ecology: Thinking from the Caribbean World*, New York, Wiley, 2021 [orig. ed.: *Une écologie décoloniale*, Paris, Seuil, 2019].

“In everyday practice, the blessings of consumption are not experienced as resulting from work or from a production process; they are experienced as a miracle”, Jean Baudrillard pointed out in *La société de consommation* (1970),<sup>28</sup> a work prolonging Karl Marx’s critique on the fetishism of commodities.<sup>29</sup>

28 Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society*, London, SAGE Publications, 1999.

29 Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, 1867.

Symbolising the shrinking of time and space as much as the saving of physical, even mental energy, cars and computers – these miracles of everyday life – have never stopped being fetishised. From their design to the marketing surrounding them, artists and designers have contributed both to this fetishisation and to emphasizing the limits of these everyday objects.

Cars have ritualised movements and transformed the topography of towns and the countryside. Parked, piled up, in traffic or crushed, they have fascinated artists from León Ferrari to César who, at the same time as Gustav Metzger, have warned us against our addiction. While the graphic designer Paul Rand, in charge of IBM’s visual identity in the 1950s, has humanised and naturalised the IT revolution, Valérie Belin’s photographs have highlighted the speed of its obsolescence and its contribution to the exponential heap of hard-to-recycle waste. As Jérôme Denis and David Pontille remind us in the present publication, “when a product appears on the market and is then purchased, it is never completely finished”.<sup>30</sup>

30 See p. 98.

51

Faced with the environmental crisis, the impoverishment of ecosystems has become the focus of many artistic practices. Since the 1990s, Mireille Gros has drawn a fictional plant every day – an artistic and palliative gesture towards the loss of biodiversity. In her narrative collages mixing colonial history, trade and spirituality, Jennifer Tee has been using as a motif the petal of tulip, the object of a speculative bubble in the 17th century and which was to become the symbol of the Netherlands.

#### BEATING TIME

After three decades of abundance, the 1973 oil crisis reminded us of the value and finitude of energy and led many countries to take preventative measures, such as changing the clocks in France in 1976. Agathe Berthaux Weil looks back, in a performance on the history of this change and the mnemonic means for turning the hands of a clock in the right direction. Her piece reveals the daily importance of measures which we refer to for getting up, as was already highlighted by On Kawara with the *I got up* series.

Sensitive to this temporal pressure, some artists have developed a biological and cosmological relationship with energy, like Robert

Filliou, Véronique Joumard or Roger Ackling for whom circadian rhythms, organised by the movement of the planets, are the benchmarks for living in perfect harmony with the universe. This notion is even more radical in the work of Hanne Darboven, whose rigorous graphic notations carry a meditative dimension, creating a peaceful relationship with time where energy seems to be concentrated in the pure present of enumeration.

Counting what counts appears to be a mantra for many an artist, as Sophie Cras argues in an essay published in the present book. While Agnes Denes' intervention in Finland has placed the rapidity of deforestation in tension with the length of time needed for a tree to grow and for forest ecosystems to be reconstituted, Éric Baudelaire has made tangible the sharp variations in financial value and in the emission of greenhouse gases during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### SPECIES OF SPACES

Eminently spatial, the practices presented in this chapter are concerned with revealing, interpreting, re-imagining and reforming the ecosystems created or transformed by human activity, be they natural or domestic.

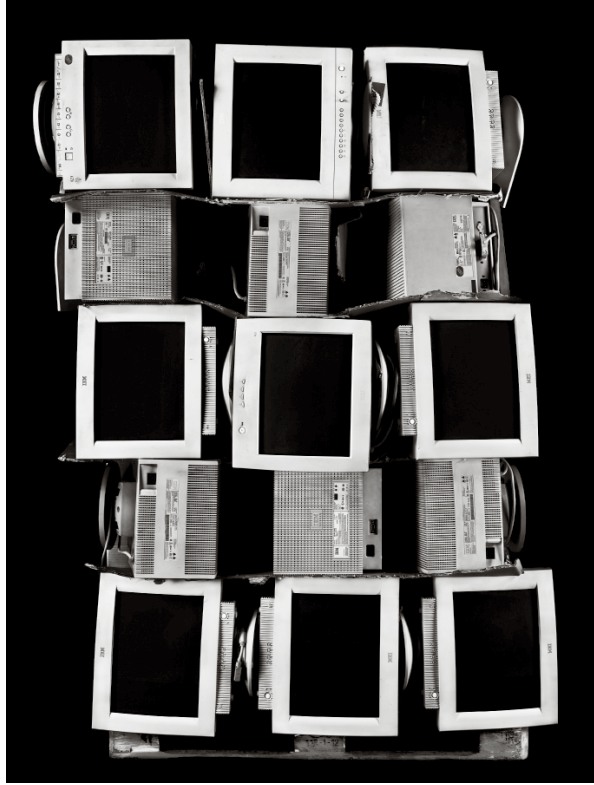
The utopia of cohabitation between landscape and human intervention, or the link between industry and nature, is represented in the science-fictional paintings of Alexandre Hogue and Marc Gai-Miniét, as much as in Gilles Clément's and Patrick Berger's plans for the redevelopment of the former Citroën factory in Paris into a series of gardens. Petrified, Dominique Ghesquière's garden offers an apocalyptic vision of a space which was once cultivated: the grass, bent by the coastal winds, covers the ground of a thicket recreated from once-living branches.

While the photographs of Lucien Clergue make evident the traces of humanity and its inventions (cars and domestic animals) in the Camargue region, Graham Stevens' *Atmosfields* celebrate the forces and invisible movements that make up the atmosphere. Sara Trillo's object-sculptures are concerned with geology and archaeology; in particular the excavations of limestone (deneholes) during the Middle Ages across the Channel, with alleged agricultural aims.

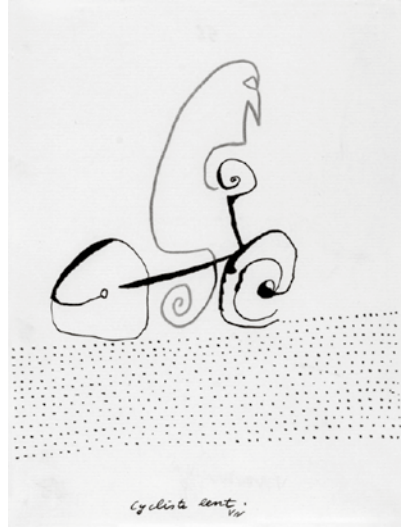
These anthropogenic landscapes coexist with altered visions of domestic space or the home, as with Jessica Stockholder's installation balancing between the outside and the inside, between suspension and gravity. Or the one by Mercedes Azpilicueta, inhabited by characters made from natural and recycled materials (latex, silk, wax), reflecting the circulation of resources and the exploitation of nature.

This chapter backs up the premise put forward by the legal researcher Jedediah Purdy, by which "the natural and the artificial

Valérie Belin, *Untitled*, 2005, Centre national des arts plastiques collection.



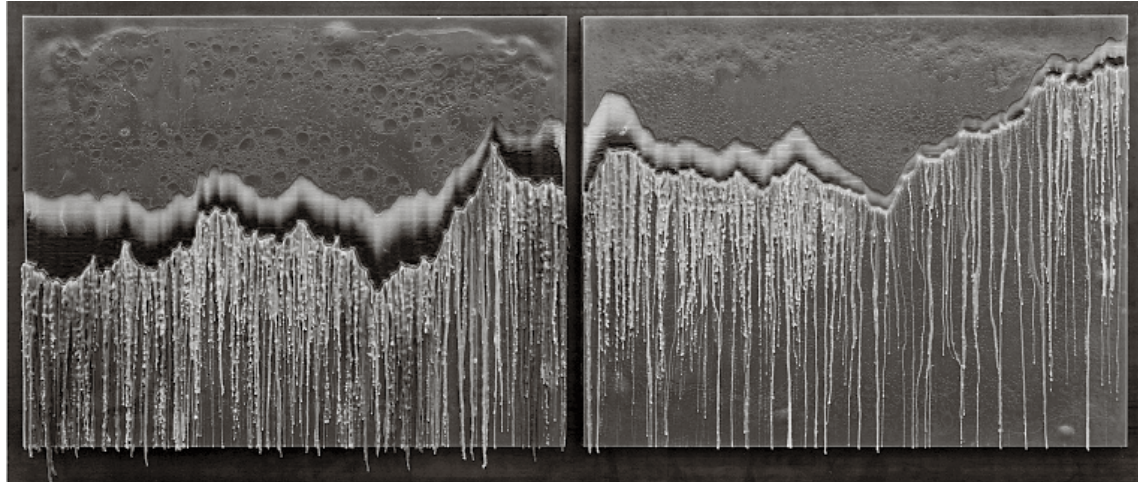
Pélagie Gbaguei, *BXL Universe II: multi.city*, 2020-2021, courtesy of the artist and Zeno X Gallery Antwerp.



Valère Novarina, *Cycliste lent* [*Slow Cyclist*], 1988, Centre national des arts plastiques collection, on deposit to the Frac Picardie in Amiens.



Éric Baudelaire, Baltic Sea  
(surface temperature anomaly),  
1859-2018, 2021, Frac  
Grand Large - Hauts-de-France  
collection.



Jennifer Tee and her assistant  
in a field of tulips,  
courtesy of the artist.

have merged at every scale. [...] The planet's landscapes, its forests and fields, along with the species that inhabit them, are a mélange of those we have created, those we have cultivated and introduced, and those we let live – or, in only the deepest jungles, have not yet reached.”<sup>31</sup>

VANITIES, GRATUITOUSNESS, SUBLIMATION

The interest of artists, architects, designers and landscape gardeners in the subject of energy can also be seen through the “misappropriation” of its initial function. Experimentations with light phenomena were at the heart of Gina Pane's artwork, which here deviates the trajectory of a sunbeam, echoing Liliane Lijn's kinetic experiments with light and diffraction. A mural by Lisa Ouakil on the facade of the Maison du Développement Économique transforms Dunkirk's monumental industrial infrastructure and its railway lines into abstract landscapes vibrating with light.

Derailing productivity was the age-old dream of many modern artists, of whom Malevich was one of the most illustrious.<sup>32</sup> This dream has not faded away but has probably just been recomposed, like in Bernard Heidsieck's concrete poetry, or in the work of Claudia Triozzi who transforms road traffic into a mineralogical poem. At the boundaries of art, architecture and design, Julie Freeman and Io Burgard also attempt to sublimate energy: the first with a sculpture transforming urine into electricity, the second with the perpetual energy of magnets built into sculptural modules created especially for the Triennial.

These unproductive uses of energy have sometimes come close to the genre of still life, incorrectly qualified as such, for they reveal the complexity of our material and symbolic relationships with living things.<sup>33</sup> While Suzanne Husky sets into ceramic flower-covered bottles of household products with polluting ingredients, Rebekka Deubner magnifies the Japanese beaches after the Fukushima disaster, which despite everything, still seem to be vibrating with life. At times concerning, the works in this section are no less a call to “stay with the trouble”<sup>34</sup> triggered by these new ecosystems which, as underlined by the anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, are not just the fruit of the Anthropocene but also of the Capitalocene.<sup>35</sup>

31 Jedediah Purdy, *After Nature: A Politics for the Anthropocene*, Cambridge and London, Harvard University Press, 2015, p. 14.

32 Kasimir Malevitch, *Laziness – the real truth of mankind*, 1921 [URL: [http://www.workaffair.greteagaard.net/satelite\\_files/malevich\\_laziness.pdf](http://www.workaffair.greteagaard.net/satelite_files/malevich_laziness.pdf)] [orig. ed.: *Лень как действительная истина человечества*, 1921].

33 Laurence Bertrand Dorléac, *Pour en finir avec la nature morte*, Paris, Gallimard, 2020.

34 Donna J. Haraway, *Staying With the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2016.

35 Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2015.

The final chapter of the exhibition highlights cultural practices invested in networking and meshing, as well as in the search for organisms, materials and technologies that support others. Such is the case for Simone Prouvé's experimentations whereby she created a weave made from stainless steel wire for the MACRO museum in Rome, designed by Odile Decq. Or those by Ève Gabriel Chabanon who, from a greenhouse, cultivates mycelium, the vegetative part of mushrooms that contributes to enriching the soil and transferring nutrients between different plants, while also constituting a plausible alternative to non-sustainable building materials. Ultimately, "Sisters in the system"<sup>36</sup> is concerned with the transmission of energy and the transformation of data into life-giving forces.

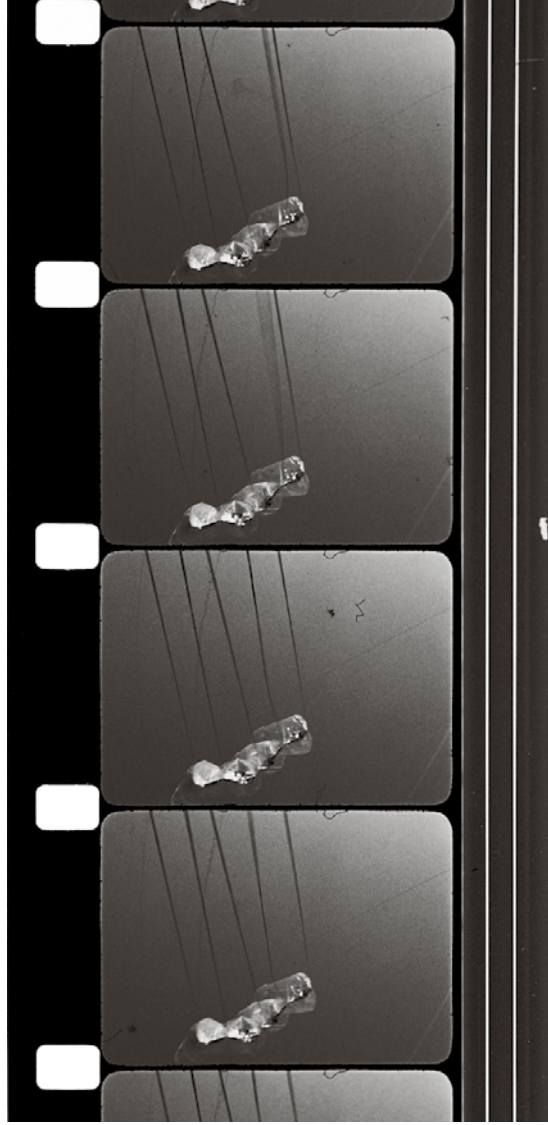
<sup>36</sup> Title freely inspired by the documentary "Sisters with Transistors. Les héroïnes méconnues de la musique électronique" (dir.: Lisa Rovner, 2021).

Music plays an important role here too: somewhere between music scores and sketches for imaginary installations, Trevor Mathison's drawings materialise sound environments fed by organised connections. In contrast, Maika Garnica's universe is analogue and tactile. Her ceramic objects are designed as conductors of sound and vibrations which vary according to hand contact with the object and the position of the body. Mathis Collins revisits the barrel organ, a vehicle for street music activated by a crank handle that unrolls a perforated card storing information to be transferred to the instrument. Working with various Dunkirk-based participants, the artist has created compositions for the instruments of the Café des Orgues in Herzelee as well as for an organ enshrined in a bas-relief, designed specifically for the Triennial.

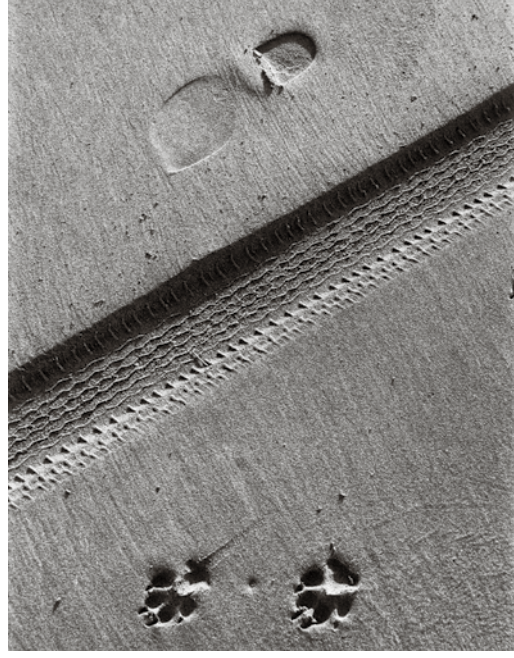
The entanglements between weaving, IT and music share a common history and make up this chapter. Perforated cards were invented in 1801 by Joseph-Marie Jacquard to store information about patterns and to mechanise weaving. The same principle, also used for operating fairground organs and mechanical pianos, was reworked in the 1830s by the mathematician Charles Babbage who designed the analytical engine at the origins of the digital revolution.

The body is further celebrated here, from the binary system of information technology of yesteryear, to the non-binarity of mushrooms. In Rashaad Newsome's video *Build or Destroy*, the cyborg-like trans character deconstructs and reconstructs itself with every movement, using the energy of voguing to destroy, before regenerating the structures surrounding human and non-human life.

Graham Stevens, *Atmosfields*, 1971, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Musée national d'art moderne - Centre de création industrielle.



Lucien Clergue, *L'homme, sa voiture et son chien (Camargue)* [*The man, his car and his dog (Camargue)*], 1972-1975, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Musée national d'art moderne - Centre de création industrielle.



Lisa Ouakil, sketch for *Chant des Dunes* [Dune song], 2022, courtesy of the artist.



Sara Trillo, prototype elements for *Holes in the Landscape*, 2023, courtesy of the artist.

If the historian Eric Hobsbawm has considered the 20th century as the age of warfare extremes,<sup>37</sup> the 21st century is probably one of ecological extremes. Not only because of the increase in climate change evidence, of which the summer of 2022 was just a taster, but also due to the energy-related causes of the instability of the current political system: from the nationalist appropriation of ecology to the emergence of right-wing populism, or from Brexit to Trumpism.<sup>38</sup> As fate would have it, one of the specialists of the relationships between fossil fuels and political systems, the economist Helen Thompson, finished her book *Disorder: Hard Times in the 21st Century* just several weeks before the Russian invasion of Ukraine.<sup>39</sup> The curatorship of the second edition of the Art and Industry Triennial has undeniably been affected by the onset of this conflict, whose human, diplomatic, social, economic and ecological consequences still remain to be seen. Yet, halfway through 2023, some of these repercussions were already palpable in the increase in energy and food prices; in record profits for energy multinationals; and in the precarity of populations, the most vulnerable being the hardest hit. In this context, the effects on art has been felt in the increased costs of energy threatening the future of state art schools; in the forcing of certain public museums to close extra days or, conversely, to serve as warm banks and food banks or sites of action for initiatives like Just Stop Oil, demonstrating in support of climate emergency.

What will happen to artistic practices in these troubled times, nobody can predict. But already we might imagine – like during the second oil crisis in 1979, when the photographer Jo Spence showed she was ready to accept “(almost) any kind of work” – that many practitioners will be hard hit by these changes. Let’s make sure that these practices do not die out with the current situation, practices which, like this exhibition, work to report and reveal other possible ways of co-evolving in, on and along with Gaia. Guided by the art of living on a damaged planet, to cite Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing<sup>40</sup> or, furthermore, by the provocative question of the indigenous Brazilian philosopher and activist Ailton Krenak asking “Why are we so afraid of falling, when falling is all we’ve ever done?”<sup>41</sup>, artists help us to believe that the state of ecstasy our civilisation has lived in over the last few centuries of extractivism might give way to another kind of ecstatic future if only we accept that the Earth and humanity are not two separate entities.

37 Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991*, London, Michael Joseph, New York, Viking Penguin, 1994.

38 Zetkin Collective, *Fascisme fossile. Extrême droite, l'énergie, le climat*, Paris, La Fabrique, 2020; Antoine Dubiau, *Écofascismes*, Caen, Grevis, 2022; Arnaud Milanese, “Le Rapport Meadows ou les limites des *Limites à la croissance*”, *AOC*, 24 January 2023 [URL: <https://aoc.media/analyse/2023/01/24/le-rapport-meadows-ou-les-limites-des-limites-de-la-croissance>].

39 Helen Thompson, *Disorder: Hard Times in the 21st Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2022.

40 Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, Heather Swanson, Elaine Gan and Nils Bubandt (eds.), *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

41 Ailton Krenak, *Ideas to Postpone the End of the World*, Toronto, House of Anansi Press, 2020, p. 61.

Bernard Heidsieck, *Circuits intégrés [Integrated circuits]*,  
July 1989, Centre national des arts plastiques collection.



Claudia Triozzi, *Five Years*, 2000,  
Centre national des arts plastiques collection.



Suzanne Husky, Omo, 2019, Centre national  
des arts plastiques collection.



Io Burgard, model for *Dunes magnétiques*  
[Magnetic dunes], 2023, courtesy of the artist.