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Time After Time is a multimedia exhibition featuring five Nordic artists of different generations interested in themes of nature and energy, time and perspective, light and darkness and human presence and absence. The exhibition spans both above and below ground, inside and outside the Nordic House.

Nature and natural materials and concepts serve as a philosophical starting point, but together the works evoke a more elusive, layered narrative. The visitor is cast out of time and space and left unsure about what is beginning or ending, caught in a liminal space where memory, matter, and perception intertwine.

Time After Time wants to celebrate nature's remarkable restorative capabilities and its cyclical sense of time, offering a sense of hope amid conflicts, disasters, and ecocide. It reflects on the contrast between natural forces and those of human and the human body, through the lens of time. It explores the various traces left by humans for other time periods and is a reminder of the relative insignificance of humanity within the broader context of time and space.

Artists: Anastasia Ax, Felipe de Avila Franco, Jussi Kivi, Saara Ekström, Sandra Mujinga
Curator: Sabina Westerholm

On view:

7th June - 14th September 2025



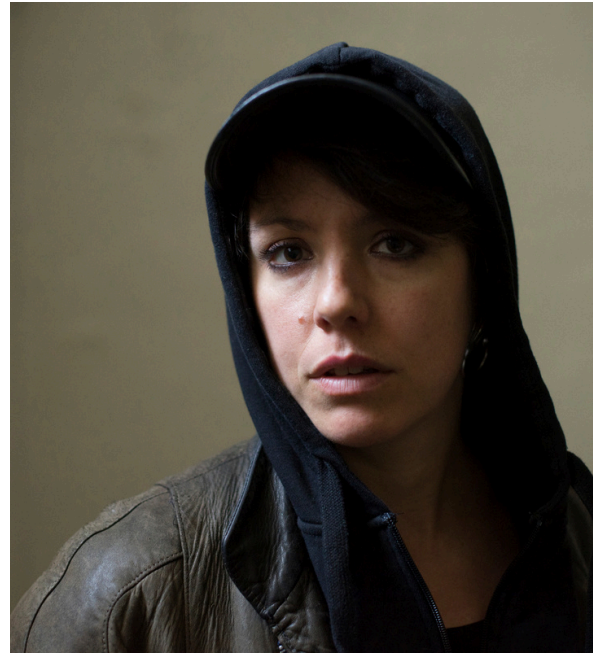
The Nordic House

HVELFING

Anastasia Ax

Anastasia Ax (b. 1979 in Sweden) is an artist based in Stockholm. Her art is characterized by a mixture of performance, painting, sculpture and sound. She uses her body as a starting point in brutal or subtle collisions with physical materials. She explores deconstruction and transformation as a way of creating new stories, destroying given ideas and breaking physical and imaginary boundaries.

Her work has been exhibited at leading Swedish and international venues, including the Royal Dramatic Theatre and Moderna Museet in Stockholm; Moderna Museet in Malmö; Gothenburg Art Hall; BoCA in Lisbon; Neue Galerie in Graz; Reykjavik Art Museum; and MARTa Herford. She has received numerous awards, nominations, and grants, including the Swedish Architecture Award from RUM, the Faber-Castell International Drawing Award, the Carnegie Art Award, and an IASPIS residency grant in New York.



"I work with materials and expression that hold both brutality and fragility. For me, it's a way of exploring the resilience and resistance of different materials. I aim to create works that assert themselves within a space, engaging in dialogue with its historical context—an invite to reflection on society, nature, and our relationships with one another."



Memorabilia (Stockholm) , Konstakademin, Stockholm

Settlers (*Reykjavik*)

Performative installation, 2025

Concrete, iron oxide, plaster, pigmented concrete, lava sand

Settlers is a site-specific installation in constant transformation. Different variations of the work have previously been shown at The Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Stockholm (2023) and at the Institut Suédois in Paris (2024). The installation consists of concrete blocks, iron oxide powder, and sculptures made from plaster and concrete, as well as black lava. The concrete blocks are on loan from BM Vallá and will be reused by the company after the exhibition, thus continuing their life cycle.

The sacks of iron oxide come from the construction industry and are used to color large volumes of concrete. In Settlers, the iron oxide powder takes on a different meaning by evoking earth pigments—colors historically used in cave paintings, rock carvings, and rites of passage. The use of iron oxide can be seen as a visual and symbolic link to both history and geology, where the color recalls the earth's own pigment and the earliest forms of human art and communication.

Settlers is an existential narrative that moves between the past, the present, and an imagined future. It reflects on humanity's recurring destructive patterns of occupation and colonization of other living beings. By activating the site through a series of physical interventions where wind, rain, and the artist's own body serve as catalysts a space is created which, despite its imposing architecture, conveys a sense of fragile, trembling resistance. All that is solid dissolves. In the ruins and their cracks, new possibilities for freedom and new burgeoning life are born.



Settlers (Norrtälje) 2024, Norrtälje Sweden

Saara Ekström

Saara Ekström (b. 1965 in Finland) is a visual artist working multidisciplinary with film, photography, sculpture, text and site-specific installations. In her work she explores the stratification of time and history, moving on the borderlands where fiction and reality, sacred and profane and growth and collapse intertwine.

Ekström's art has been presented in numerous solo- and group exhibitions in Europe, America and Asia and her experimental films have gained recognition at international film festivals. She received the Finnish State Art Prize for visual arts in 2023, the Finnish media art AVEK award in 2018 and the Southern Finland Art Prize in 2017, and she has been nominated for Below Zero, Ars Fennica and Carnegie Art Awards, among others.

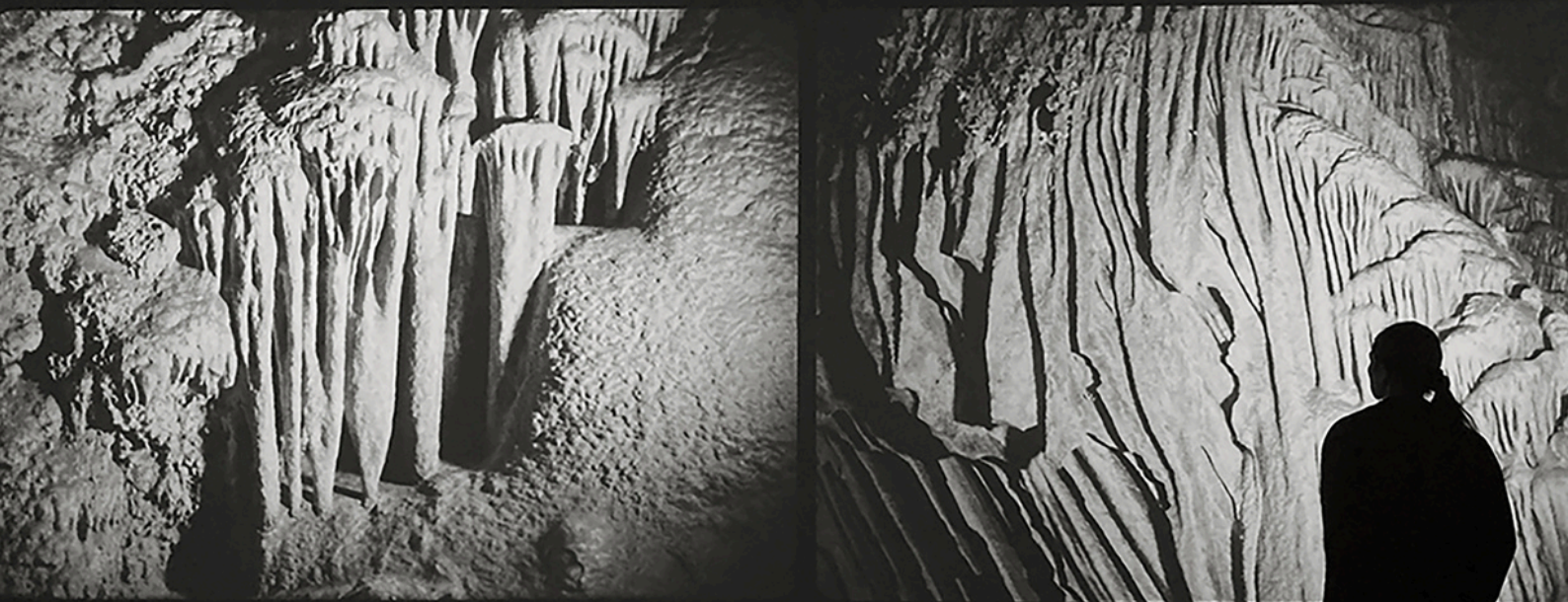


Geopsyche

2023, three-channel 16 mm film to digital,
duration: 22:36 min.

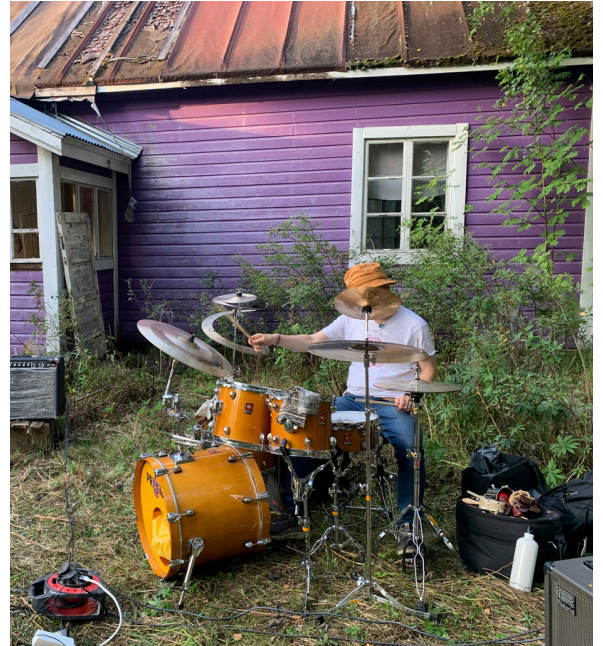
Geopsyche is a meditation on the magnitude of geological timescales on the earth; a cycle of remarkably slow changes that does not easily fit our comprehension. The work focuses on the complex metabolism of our planet, and examines the consciousness amassed in its sediments. The transcendental flow of images transports us through archaic landscapes in gradual but constant transformation, searching for connections between geological events, evolution and the subconscious. Our own germ is also to be found in this enigmatic process, where the end is yet another beginning.

Ekström filmed material during five years in the Finnish archipelago, which the last ice age formed 18,000 years ago, and in the archives of natural history museums in Uppsala, Stockholm, Helsinki and Turku. The process took her deep into the Nerja caves in Spain, where geological, biological and archaeological research is being made, and to Iceland where geothermal forces shift and fracture the surface of the Earth, exposing the planets glowing core.



Jussi Kivi

In his artistic work, Jussi Kivi has explored unknown, underground, forgotten, and neglected places. He has worked across multiple media, including photography, video, drawing, miniature models, and maps. Through this material, Kivi sheds light on the borderland between nature and culture, with a particular focus on decayed industrial landscapes. For him, these remnants represent the core of the fossil based industrial culture – a culture that, on a global scale, continuously destroys its own conditions for life.



"Burzi" - Forever Leaking Toxic Mine, Sulitjelma, Norway
[Named after Burzum - The Norwegian far-right heavy musician and killer].
Photo, 2016



The Chemical Spa, underground
gunpowder factory, Sweden.
Photo, 2019



Underground Lake during Ice-run.
Russian bunker from the First World
War, Helsinki, Finland
Photo, 2006

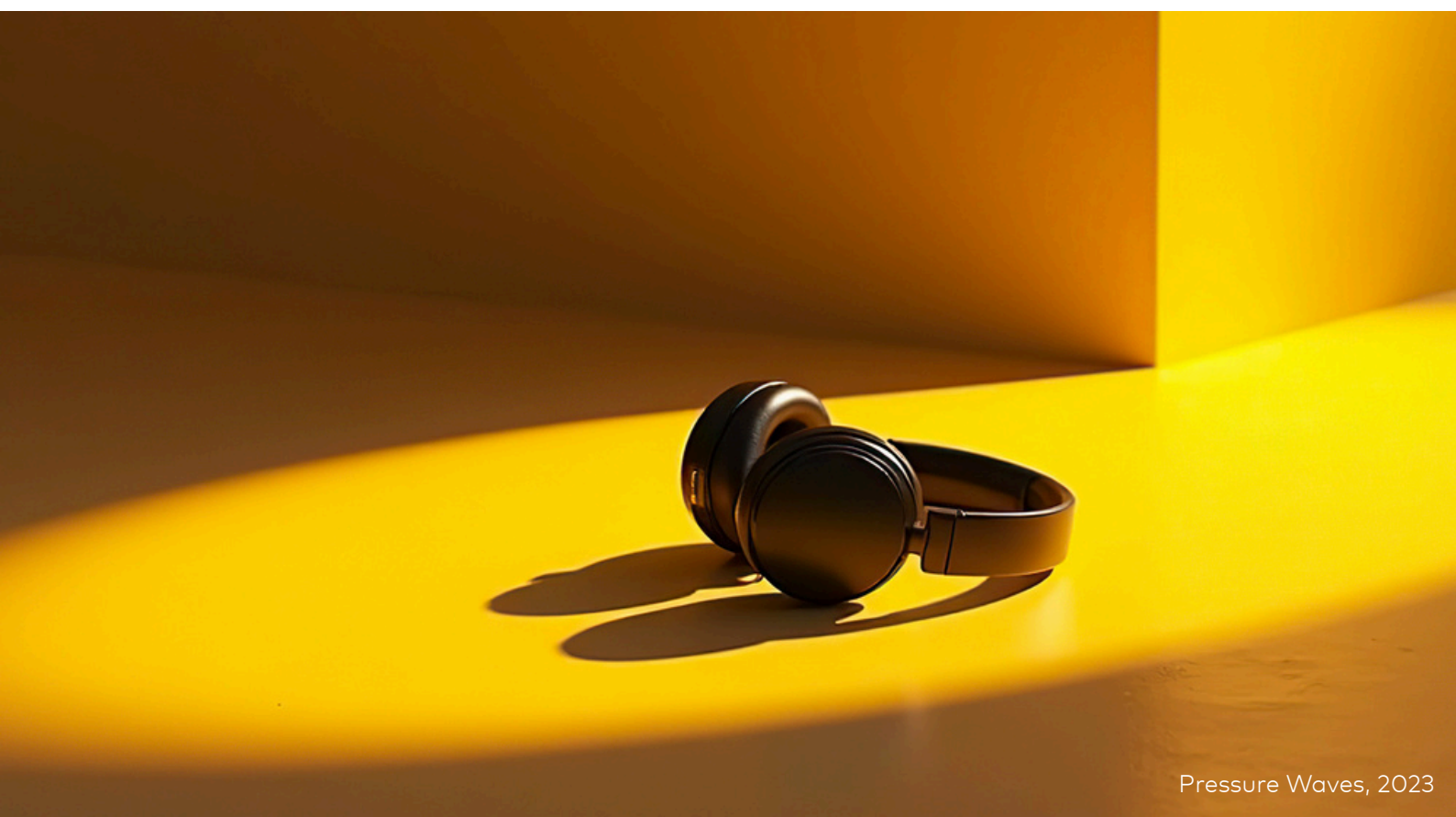
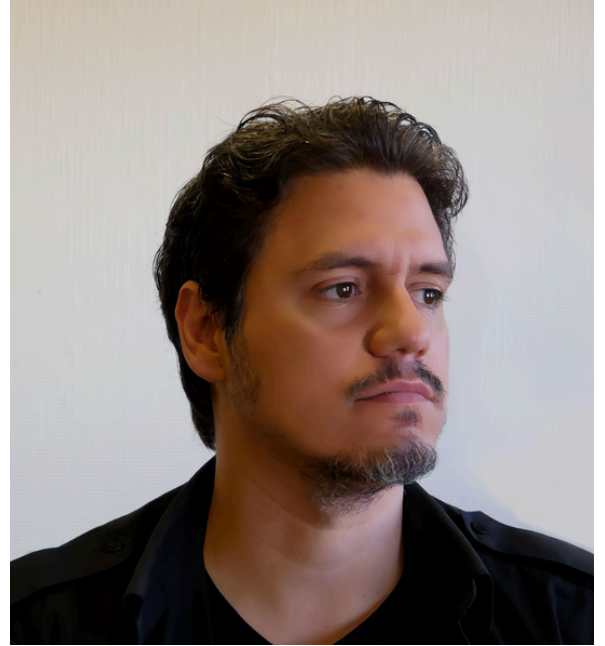


Styx - Subterranean River of
Shit under the Finnish Capital.
Photo, 2016

Felipe de Avila Franco

Felipe de Ávila Franco (b. 1982 in Brazil) is a visual artist based in Finland who has been working across South America and Europe since 2013. His practice explores the intersection of sculpture with other media, addressing themes of biopolitics and environmental aesthetics to investigate the relationship between human society and the natural world. Blending traditional and experimental techniques, he incorporates and transforms industrial materials and residues into sculptures, installations, multimedia works, and electromechanical systems to challenge conventional notions of nature, energy, territory, and the human body.

Franco's work has been exhibited at prestigious venues such as Galleria Scultor (Helsinki, 2024), The Umbrella Arts Center (Massachusetts, 2023), the Finnish Cultural Institute (New York, 2023), and the Amos Rex Museum (Helsinki, 2022). His pieces are included in several notable collections, including the Museum of Brazilian Arts (São Paulo), the Helsinki Art Museum (HAM), and the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma (Helsinki).



Cold Bodies #1 & #2

UV offset print, 2023

Artificial intelligence generated image on
BoPet emergency blanket - 120x160cm

The thermal blankets in this piece, used as reflective surfaces and substrates for UV printing, explore the intricate relationship between light, image, body, and mind. Their reflective properties transform their original function—regulating bodily warmth in emergencies—into an alternative materiality, revealing an elusive dimension where unknown landscapes emerge.

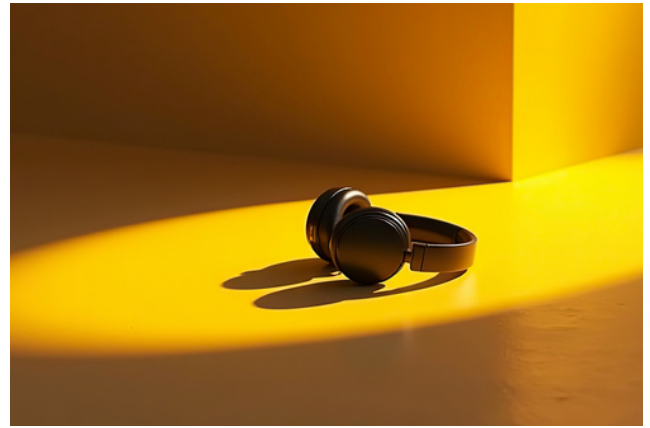
The impossibility of fully perceiving the printed images due to the interplay of light over the reflective surface compels viewers to shift perspectives, engaging in a dynamic process of discovery. At the same time, the AI-generated depictions of thermal coal rocks question the nature of human thought, action, and creation, as well as their entanglement with energy – both consumed and conserved – not just by the body, but also by the mind. The juxtaposition of thermal coal, which holds the sun's energy accumulated over millions of years, with images generated through free AI platforms raises questions about creativity as an exploited resource and the ethical complexities surrounding the use of such technologies, their consequences, and their impact on the essence of artistic and intellectual labor.



Pressure Waves

Sound generated from 40 days of electromagnetic wave recordings emitted by the Sun. Sound installation, 2023
Duration 01:07'10"

The sound installation features a digital interpretation of the 'sound of the sun'. It consists of 40 days of recording of the electromagnetic spectrum 'vibration' emitted by the sun, and processed by the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory's (SOHO) Michelson Doppler Imager (MDI) data. The process of generating these sounds began with Doppler velocity data, which was meticulously refined to eliminate interference and equipment noise. The data was then filtered at approximately 3 mHz to isolate pure sound waves, followed by interpolation to fill in missing information. Finally, the data was scaled and accelerated by a factor of 42,000, transforming it into frequencies perceptible to the human ear.



The piece plays through a pair of headphones resting on the gallery floor, enveloped in a warm halo of light that evokes a ghostly image of the sun. This creates a suspended atmosphere, inviting a more intimate experience, as if transporting the audience to a realm where sound and light merge as complementary energies.

Eclipse

Sculpture, 2017/2025
Wood, light bulb, oil, and electromechanics
30 x 30 x 16cm

An eclipse marks a rare alignment – an interruption in the continuity of light. Throughout history, such events have stirred both awe and unease, interpreted by ancient cultures as signs, omens, or divine gestures. In its fleeting obscurity, the eclipse invites us to contemplate cycles of visibility and disappearance, of power concealed and revealed.

The work draws on that metaphor to reflect on our entanglement with energy. A suspended light – reminiscent of the sun – shines through layers of industrial residue: oil, the dark byproduct of ancient sunlight. Fossil fuels, foundational to the modern world, are themselves a form of buried time, organic matter transformed over millennia.



Here, light and oil confront one another – once kin, now estranged – expressing a tension between origin and consequence.

Through a quietly looping electromechanical system, the piece stages a choreography of illumination and eclipse, reminding us of the fragile balances that underlie both natural rhythms and human systems.

Sandra Mujinga

Sandra Mujinga (b. 1989, Goma, DRC) is a multidisciplinary Norwegian artist and musician who works between New York, Berlin and Oslo. Thinking through speculative fiction in Afrofuturist tradition, Sandra Mujinga plays with economies of visibility and disappearance. Her works negotiates questions of self-representation and -preservation, appearance, and opacity, through an interdisciplinary practice in which she often reverses traditional identity politics of presence. The artist's works depart from a purely anthropocentric approach to understanding the transient world we are living in now, for that reason Mujinga is looking for inspiration in how animals are developing survival strategies and adapting to hostile surroundings.



Portrait of the artist by Thando Sikawuti



Amnesia? Amnesia?

2019. Single-channel video installation,
five painted MDF boards.

Length: 04:55 minutes

Actor: Joe Von Hutch.

In this video work the actor John von Hutch performs a monologue, written by Sandra Mujinga, to the audience. Fundamental to this work is the question of what it means to exist in the dark; a recurring question throughout Mujinga's practice.

The "dark", according to Mujinga, although seemingly empty is in fact a space rich with creative possibilities. The dark background of the video acts as a generative space in which the character is able to discuss his experience of being in the dark in an intimate and conscious way.

Following entomologist Anduse-Poku's argument about the void as being "foundational for a coming-into-being, a gesture of multiplicity" the figure's monologue branches out to address complex and multiple ideas. Not only does the figure seem to be emerging from the dark background due to Mujinga's use of filters, he addresses the audience to join him in this space of possibilities ("I want you to stay here with me, in the dark").



Amnesia? Amnesia? 2019. Charlottenborg.
Photo by David Stjernholm

Time After Time

Opening Remarks by Dr. Elisa Johanna Piispa

As a geophysicist I often think about time. Not the ticking of the clock, but the time written into the land itself. Recent lavas that are currently cooling close to Grindavik, volcanic lava layers in Westfjords that are millions of years old, supercontinents and other Earth's cycles that existed in the deep past, starting billions of years ago. This is the language I work with: layers, magnetic minerals, stories of the past hidden in rocks.

But I'm also just a person — with to-do lists, birthdays to remember (if I can), deadlines. What I'd like to invite you to do now is to take a short journey with me into deep time — and back again. A moment together to stretch our sense of time.

What is our political memory? Often it feels like it's only four years. Our generational memory? Three or four generations — after all we might remember the names of our great-grandparents.

When were the great pyramids of Egypt built? About 4500 years ago. But think of it, Cleopatra, who died in year 30 BC, lived closer to us, than she herself lived to the great pyramids. Did she think of the great pyramids as we think of her? Ancient? The human species have been around 300 000 years. That's roughly 15 000 generations. But let's not stop here.

How about Iceland? It is very young geologically speaking but still formed by fire and ice over the past 15 million years. In my career I have lived on four continents, and worked with rocks from all continents, some tracing back to 2.7 billion years back. And that is still only half the age of the Earth itself — which formed around 4.5 billion years ago. The universe itself is believed to be nearly 14 billion years old. In this cosmos our planet is about half-way through its lifespan — in another 4.5 billion years we will be engulfed by an expanding sun.



Dr. Elisa Johanna Piispa, during the opening
Photo: Eypór Árnason

This may sound depressing to some, but to me it's beautiful. Especially because in these vast timescales, complexity – life has found a way – again and again.

Let's return to the beginning of life here on Earth, which dates back at least to 3.5 billion years. Life always changes its surroundings, for better or worse. After all the first great environmental change was not caused by humans, but by bacteria.

Cyanobacteria were the first to perform photosynthesis – and slowly, in a billion years, they filled the atmosphere with oxygen 2.5 billion years ago. It was the original "terraforming" event enabling the emergence of more complex life forms. Even after the rise of oxygen, it took nearly 2 billion years more for the Earth to turn green.

Mammals appeared on the scene around 230 million years ago, but they mainly remained smaller, hidden until the dinosaurs were wiped out 65 million years ago. That's around the time we shared a common ancestor with all other primates – a genus called *Purgatorius* – a tiny, mouse-like mammal, no heavier than a plum, with limbs made for climbing through ancient trees. From it, gorillas, chimpanzees and us slowly came to be. Every one of us, in this room and on this planet, descend from that tiny, clever, surviving creature.

But what is even more mesmerizing to me: we are not entirely human. At the cellular level, less than half of the cells in your body are human. The rest are bacteria, archaea, fungi – your microscopic co-travelers. You are not just you. You are a colony, a living ecosystem. So, when we speak of nature and time, we're not outside observers, we are participants. Shaped by ancient life and at the same time inhabited by it.

If we struggle grasping time from historical and geological point of view, physics offers an even stranger view. Time might not even be real in the way we imagine it. Einsteins theories tell us that time and space are inseparable – one cannot exist without the other – and that time is not absolute. The faster you move, the slower you age. Gravity bends spacetime and slows clocks.



From the opening of Time After Time
Photo: Eyþór Árnason

Some physicists believe all moments – past, present and future – all coexist. There may be no single universal "now".

So, what is time, really?

A dimension? A sensation? A construct?

Maybe like the artists in this exhibition, we don't need to explain it. Maybe we need to feel it.

This is why an exhibition like this, Time After Time, is so important. It brings us into conversation with nature, time and our role in it. Through matter, light, dark, energy, the five artists here invite us to experience time not merely as a number but as a feeling. Stretch it, slow it, sense it's depth.

The works in this show remind us of our smallness, but also our entanglement. We are not above nature or separate from it. We are of it, part of life. Life leaves traces, and we leave traces, whether we intend or not.

From the perspective of Earth, the human presence is really just a blink of an eye.
From the perspective of life, we are one of its many experiments.

From human perspective – this moment matters. What we do now, how we live, how we shape our world – that matters.

If bacteria could transform the atmosphere over a billion years and still thrive in it, we too have the power to transform – not only our environment, but our own relationship to it. Time is vast. Time, after time, has shaped life. We are made of time. Made of elements forged in the stars. We are breathing, thinking, brief sparks of awareness in an old, very old universe. Yet, time will keep on shaping us. And these, to me, are miracles worth contemplating.

Thank you, and I hope you enjoy your time, also at this exhibition.



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