



Portfolio  
Julian Charrière

# Thickens, pools, flows, rushes, slows

2020

Obsidian block

Spat up from the belly of the earth in volcanic eruptions, lava cools rapidly to form obsidian, a congealed liquid whose reflective powers have long entranced cultures. Dark obsidian mirrors delivered omens to the Aztec and pleasantly distorted landscapes for Romantic painters. Sculpted from large blocks of obsidian punctuated by polished concave dishes *Thickens, pools, flows, rushes, slows* unearths these complex histories and invites us to gaze beyond the surface into deep time.



Above: *Thickens, pools, flows, rushes, slows*, 2020; Installation view, *Towards No Earthly Pole*, 2020, Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau, Switzerland  
On the left: *Thickens, pools, flows, rushes, slows*; Installation view, *Thickens, pools, flows, rushes, slows*, 2020, Sies & Höke, Düsseldorf, Germany



On this and next page: Details, *Thickens, pools, flows, rushes, slows*, 2020





# Towards No Earthly Pole

2019

Photographs: Medium-format color photographs

4K color film, 32:10 aspect ratio, 14.2 Ambisonic soundscape, 104'30"

[Watch video online](#) - Password: tnepole



Glacial landscapes have never before had such a strong visual presence in popular culture, where they serve as prominent symbols of anthropogenic climate disturbance. Although few people have visited their remote geographies, glacial regions loom large in the collective imagination, as a last stronghold and melting ideal of a fantasized reality.

*Towards No Earthly Pole* was conceived in 2017, when Julian Charrière was invited aboard a Russian research ship as part of the first Antarctic Biennale, inspiring subsequent research and expeditions to equally remote and hostile glacial regions.

Along with his Berlin-based team, he developed customized technological equipment, including drones carrying spotlights and cameras. The video footage for the film was recorded at night, contrary to the romantic image of a dazzling landscape of white snow and bright daylight that we generally see pictured. A spotlight carried by a drone reveals the massive landscape in snippets, limiting the range of vision and heightening its drama by the deep shadows the icebergs cast. Eerie sounds of cracking ice and water flowing remind us that this frozen landscape is very much alive, breathing, moving and constantly evolving. All of these elements combined underline an otherworldly presence and a scenario in which one begins to lose all sense of grounding or scale, highlighting that the western man's limited experience and, at times, falsely constructed perception of the polar regions is both reinforced and challenged.

On this page: *Towards No Earthly Pole*, 2019; Installation view, *Towards No Earthly Pole*, 2020, Aargauer Kunsthau, Aarau, Switzerland

On next page: *Towards No Earthly Pole - Komsomolskoe*, 2019











# The Purchase of the South Pole

2019

Coconut cannon on sledge runners, blankets from the Rhône Glacier, coconuts in lead sarcophagi

Inspired by Jules Verne's 1889 novel, *The Purchase of the North Pole*, as well as his voyage to the former nuclear test sites in the Bikini Atoll, Julian Charrière proposed to be the first person to shoot a weapon on Antarctica since the signing of The Antarctic Treaty as a part of the first Antarctic Biennale. Mounted on the bow of the ship like a dystopian figurehead is a massive, air-pressurized cannon. Unlike similarly mechanized cannons which pop-up across America every autumn to shoot pumpkins, the iron barrel of this sculpture found its form in the cast of the trunk of a coconut tree. Upon the boat's arrival to Antarctica, coconuts collected from the Bikini Atoll were to be shot from the cannon on the continent. With his sculpture Charrière planned to move the earth in his own peaceful way. By subverting the typically aggressive use of a weapon, he was commenting on the many shifts which the Antarctic has seen: the shift 52 million years ago from tropical oasis to frozen tundra; the shift from a land which destroyed men who try to conquer it to a land destroyed by men who are desperately trying to mend it; a once pristine, sublime place which has now felt the foot print of millions of tourists and researchers. Shortly before the work was to be shipped to South America in order to embark on its expedition to Antarctica, it was confiscated by the Berlin Police and investigated as a possible weapon.







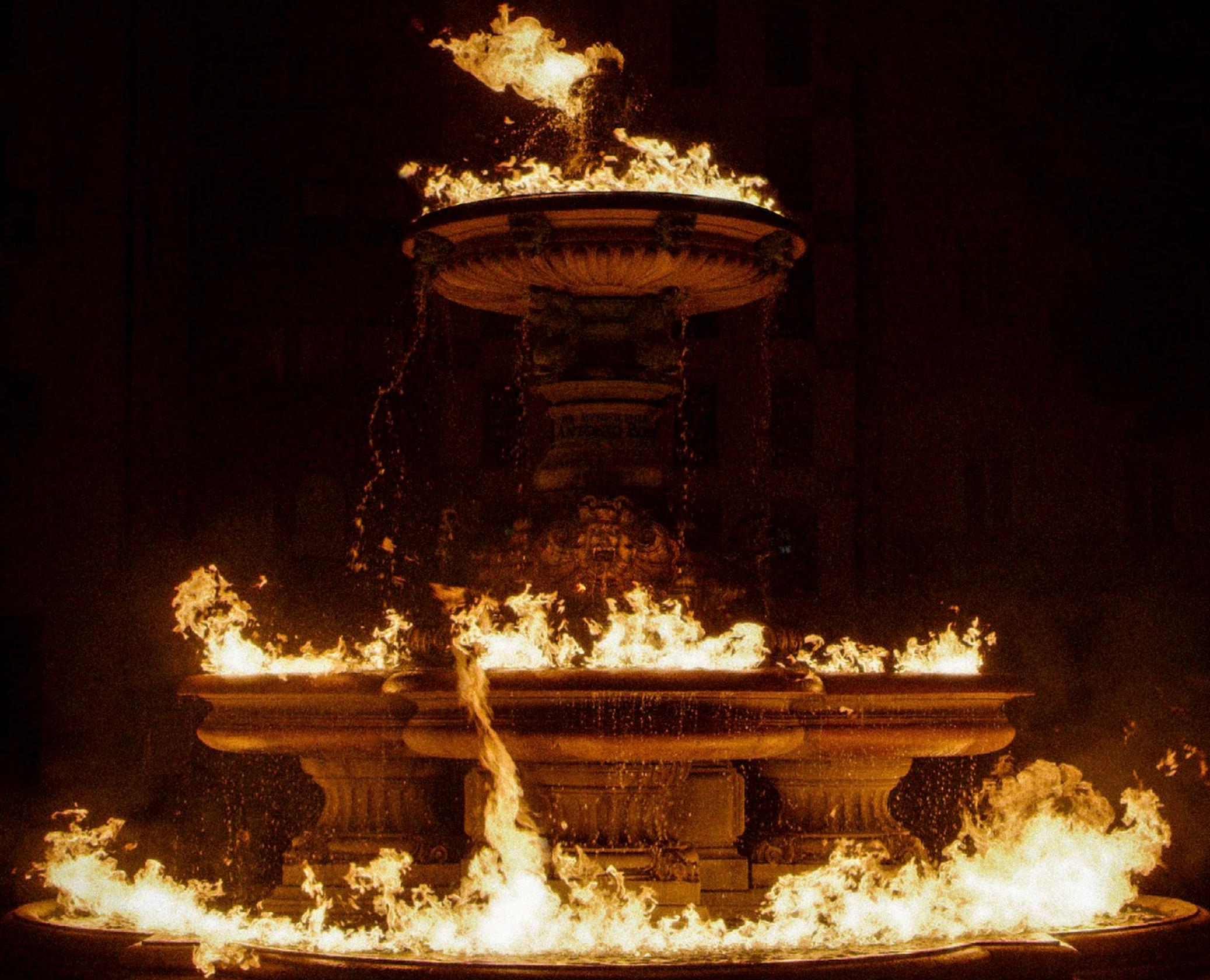
# And Beneath It All Flows Liquid Fire

2019

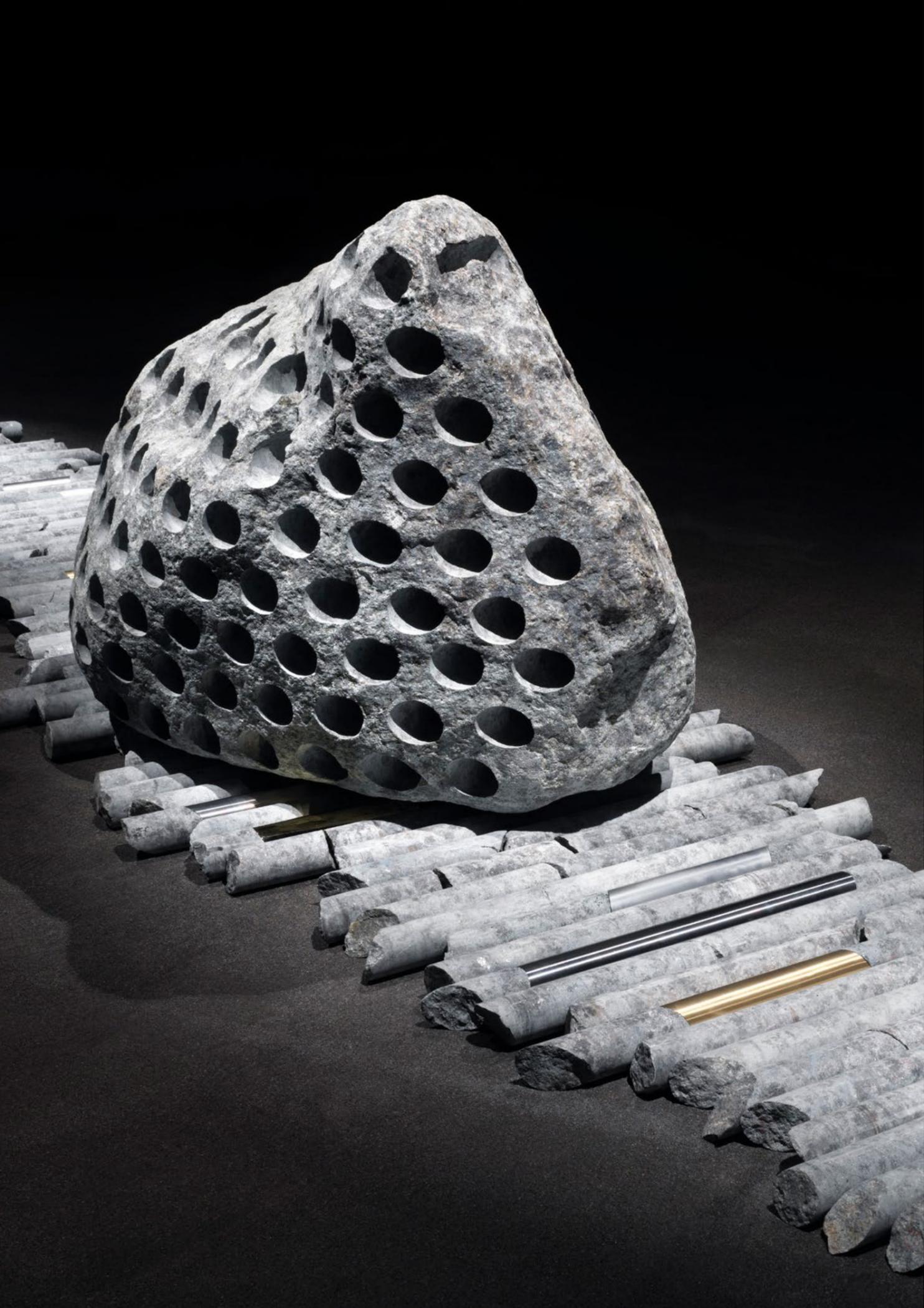
UHD color video, 16:10 aspect ratio, stereo sound,  
continuous video loop

[Watch video online](#) - Password: beneathfire

Suggesting multiple ways in which *And Beneath It All Flows Liquid Fire* can be interpreted, Charrière notes that beneath the political debates, philosophical reflections and symbolic meanings associated with various phenomena of the environmental system, there lies the original and autonomous state of the planet, free from all human interpretation. Deep beneath the Earth's surface, between its outermost crust and inner core, magma—the molten or semi-molten natural material from which all igneous rocks are formed—constantly churns. Even in the most frozen regions of the earth, this “liquid fire” constantly flows. In this video, Charrière's fountain depicts an absurd state that implies the coexistence of opposite elements, water and fire. The artist turns the traditional iconography of the fountain on its head in symbolic terms too: the connection with water and the concept of a spring of life now dominated by flames. Fire has an ambiguous meaning, for it is not just an element of destruction but is also considered humankind's oldest conquest, corresponding to the beginning of civilization. It is no coincidence that Charrière juxtaposes the remote locations of the glacial landscape not only with the element of fire, but also with the ancient symbol of its earliest settlements: the fountain.





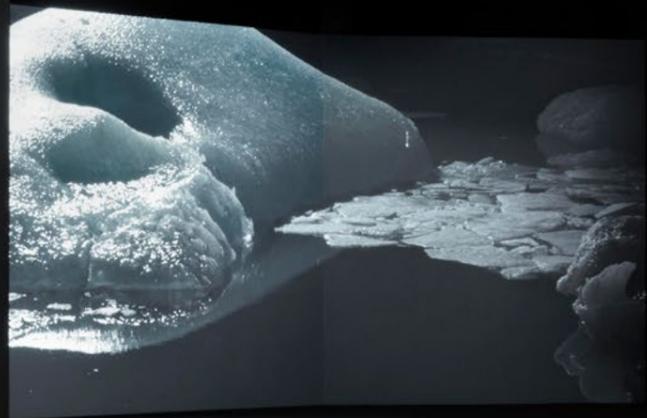


# Not All Who Wander Are Lost

2019

Glacial erratic rock, drill cores, aluminium, brass, copper, gold, steel, silver

Erratics continue to have a mysterious and highly evocative power even though modern science has revealed how these stones were carried to their present location. Julian Charrière reflects in this work on the movement of matter and further human intervention. Dislocated from their natural sites, the erratic rocks are perforated multiple times by core-drilling. This process of extraction not only symbolizes the human consumption of natural resources, it recognizes the scientific method of collecting historic geological data. With the same core drilling technique, samples taken from glaciers provide information on the evolution of the Earth's climate from the current age back over millennia. Charrière's core samples, however, are associated with the time of human history and again, human intervention. At points where the core samples were broken during extraction, sections of precious and semi-precious metals are inserted, which are typically mined. The more the drilling advances, the lighter the boulder becomes physically, seemingly moving over the bed of core-drilled stone arranged like in ancient transportation methods, continuing the original glacier journey. However, the core-drilling procedure is one of progressive deletion and an apt metaphor for our current ecological crisis: if this process of human intervention progresses too far, the boulder will crumble beyond a point of no return.





On this and next page: *Not All Who Wander Are Lost*, 2020; Installation view,  
*Towards No Earthly Pole*, 2020, Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau, Switzerland

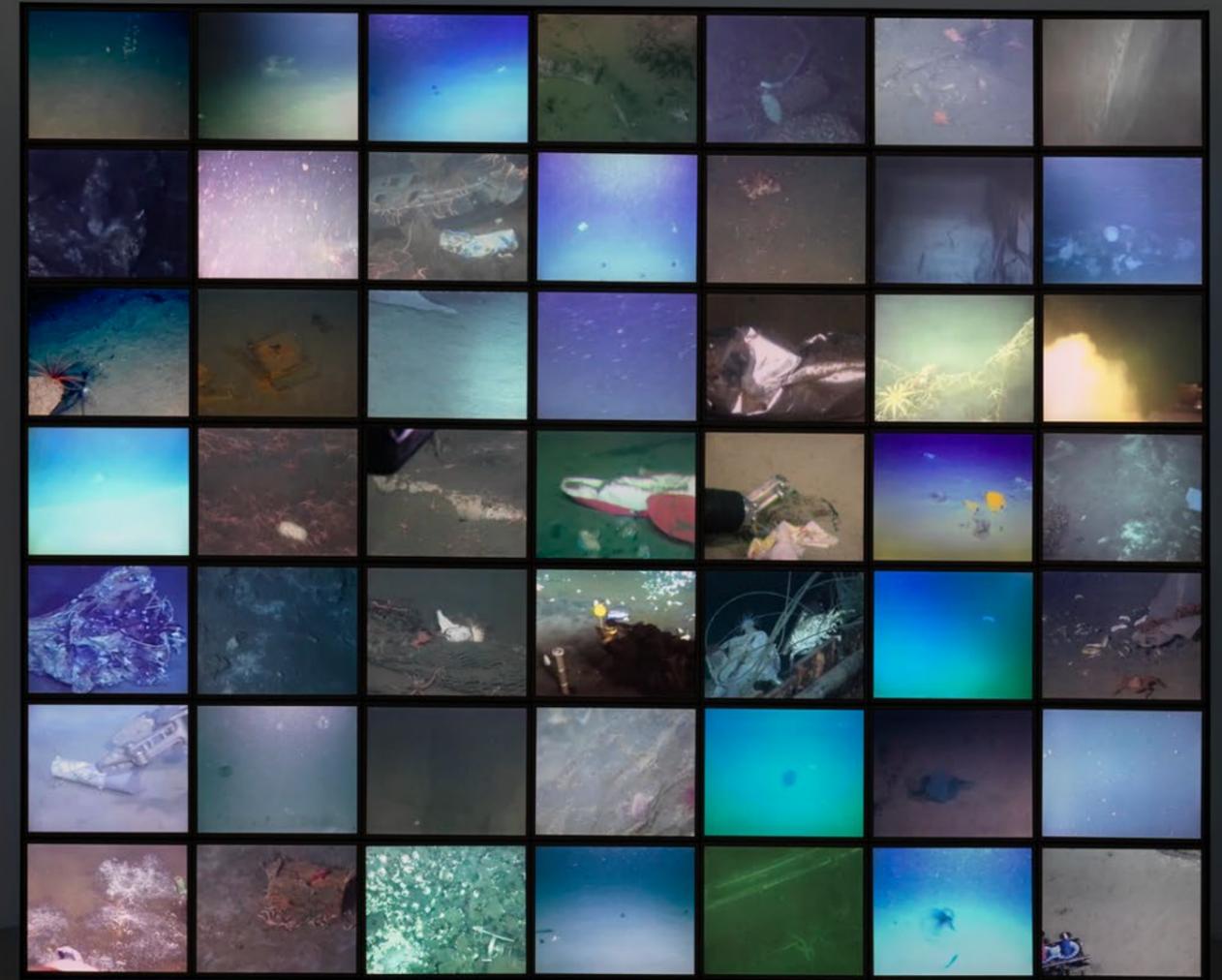


# The Gods Must Be Crazy

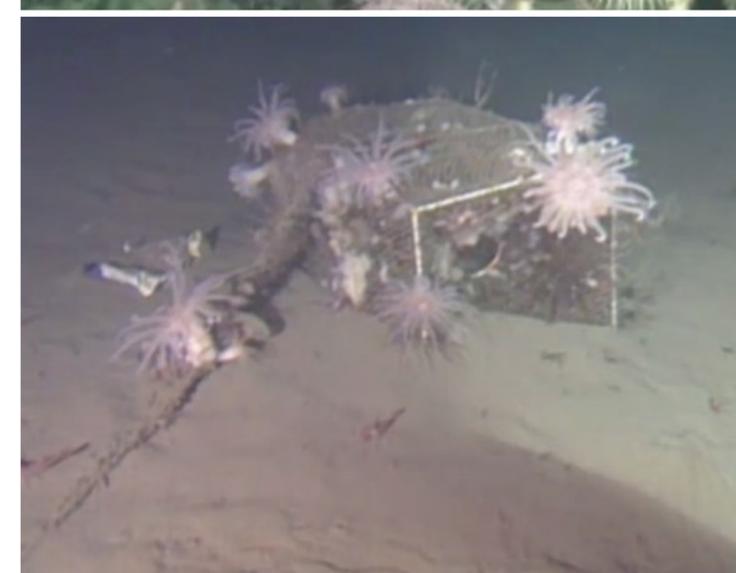
2019

49-channel multimedia installation, found  
underwater footage, 5:4 aspect ratio, 05'30"

In his work *The Gods Must Be Crazy* Charrière leads us to the mysterious grounds of the deep sea - likely the most remote and least explored environment of our planet whose perception through us is limited to our gathering and evaluation of scientific images. Fortynine screens display a collection of found underwater footage. Each of the clips chosen by the artist acts as a contemporary vanitas, as well as a window to a possible post-human future: Artificial intelligence scanning the ground of the ocean in the search of remnants of human presence, hubris of our world drowned in the abyss. Charrière's evaluation and enactment of this found footage brings to light how our endeavours of scientific exploration into seemingly uncharted territory are already pre-empted by the influence of our modern society. On the scientific journeys to the unknown, we encounter the traces of our culture manifesting themselves in the dislocation of everyday objects which - sometimes as desolate ruins, sometimes inhabited by sea dwellers - turn into unintended monuments of Modernity.



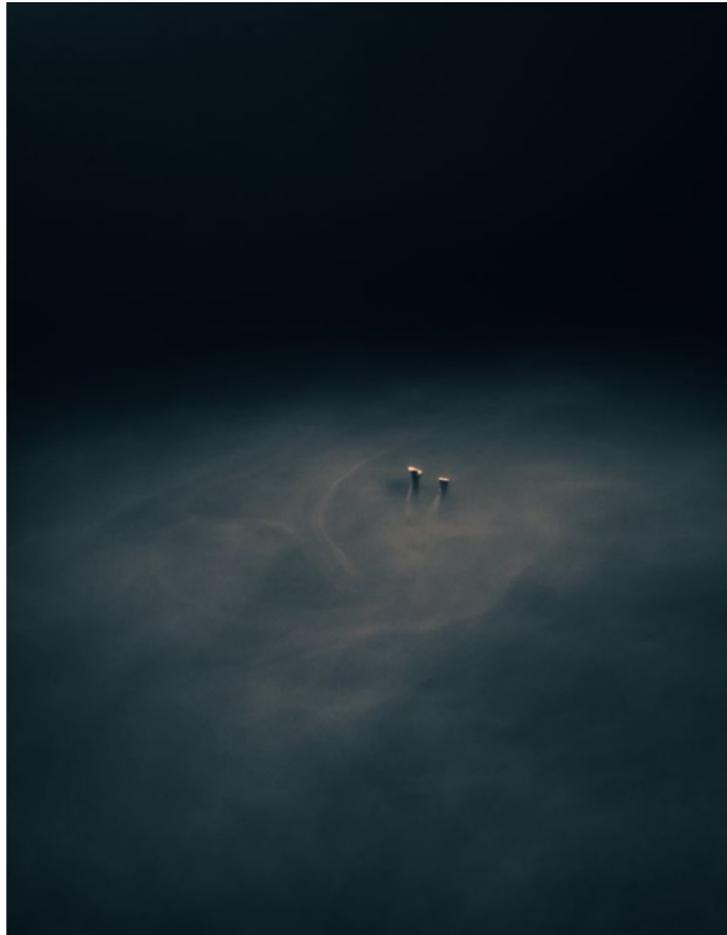




# Where Waters Meet

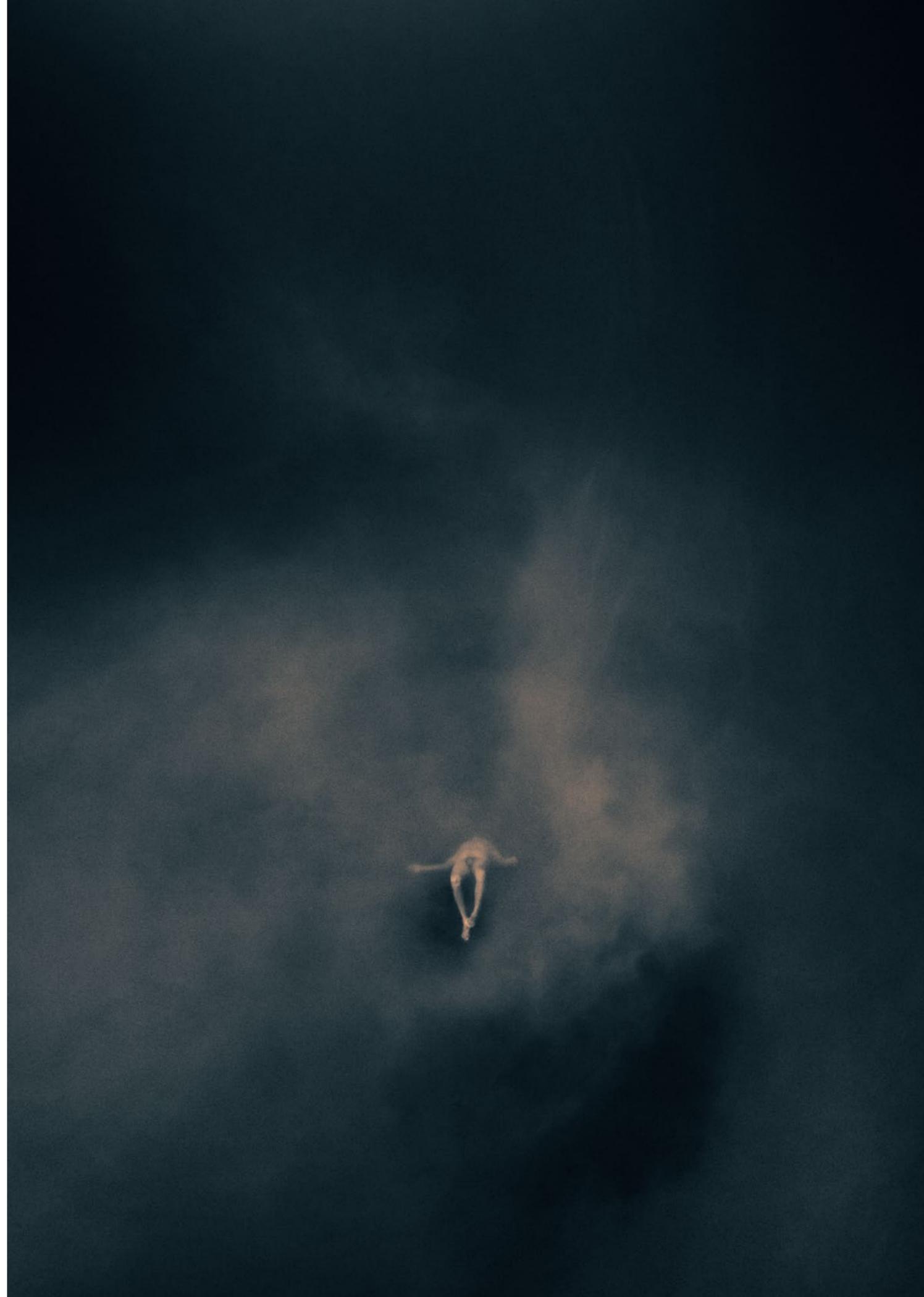
2019

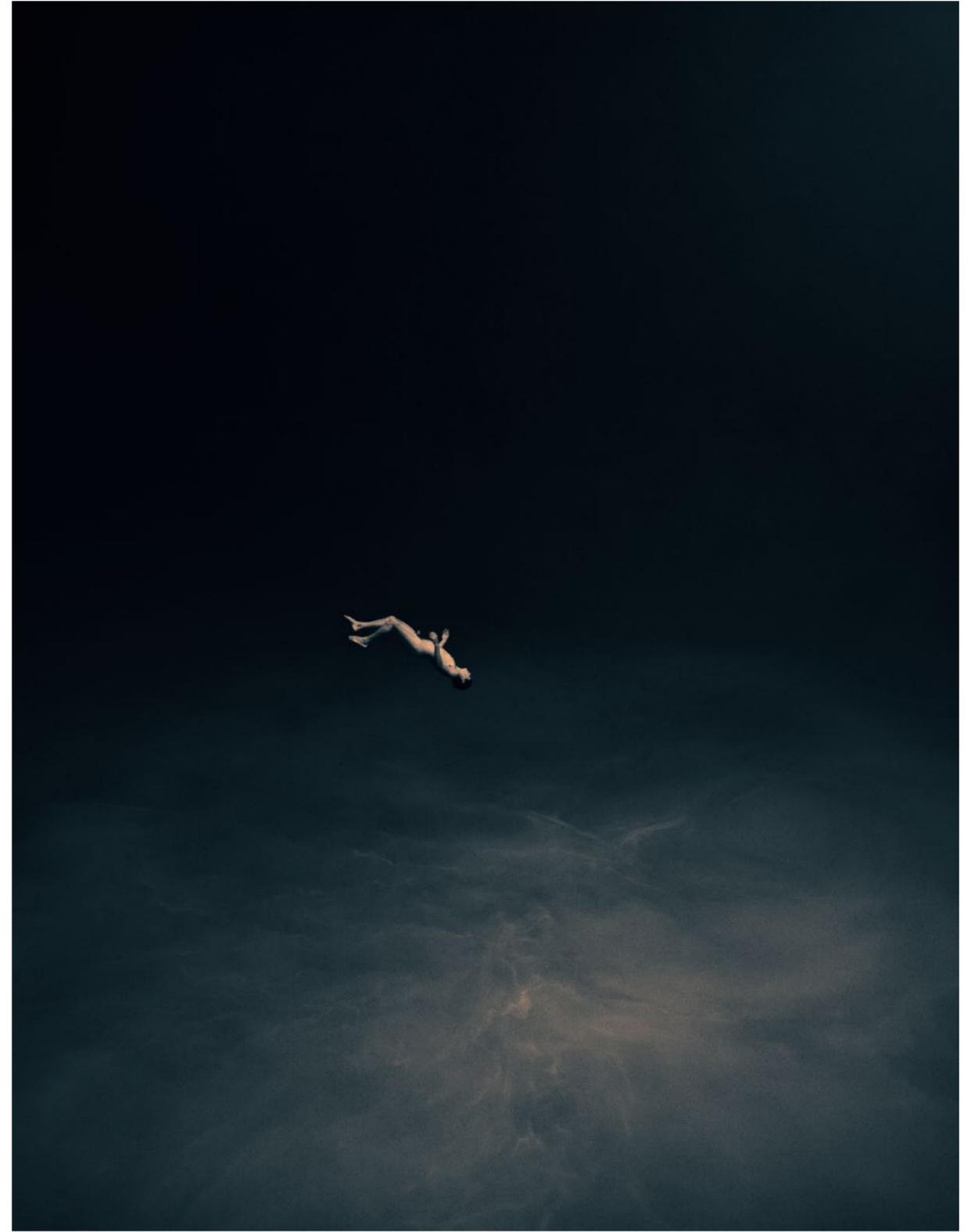
Photographs



*Where Waters Meet* is a series of photographs of free divers captured and disappearing inside an aquatic cave in Mexico's Cenotes, which are lakes and rivers within oceans; unique micro-biological universes. Naked and, in pictorial terms, dissolving, these figures physically enter another layer of the ocean imaginary. Half of their bodies obscured as they penetrate what is known as a chemocline, entering an opaque layer of bottom water—a soup of sulfurous bacteria. Through the iconographic unconscious of these images, the divers' descent into a literal abyss conjures up a sea of metaphorical allusion. Contributing to a picture of the oceanic system that has grown significantly more complex in recent decades, such worlds within worlds are relatively recent discoveries. As we come to better understand the sea, domains from evolutionary theory through to climate science are being revolutionized. Sliding into this previously silent (unseen and unthought) realm, Charrière's free divers seem caught in some kind of a dance; a graceful fall. From where—and to what?

Above: *Where Waters Meet* [3.98 atmospheres], 2019  
On the right: *Where Waters Meet* [3.93 atmospheres], 2019





Above: *Where Waters Meet* [3.18 atmospheres], 2019

On the left: *Where Waters Meet* [3.77 atmospheres], 2019

On next page: *Where Waters Meet*, 2019; Installation view, *Silent World*, 2019, Dittrich & Schlechtriem, Berlin, Germany





# As We Used to Float

2018

Single-channel video installation, Full HD color video, 9:16 aspect ratio, stereo sound, continuous video loop

[Watch video online](#) - Password: Rzk9ple5

*As We Used to Float*, a film by Julian Charrière, transports the viewer sixty-five meters below the Pacific Ocean, to Bikini Atoll's graveyard of sunken ships wherein decommissioned war vessels on which the United States used to test atomic bombs have been left to be consumed by the sea. As the American bunkers in the Pacific were primarily built to be photographed and allow photographers to document the mushroom clouds of the bombs dropped there—images that recorded the first moments in history in which science and technology permitted mankind the power to destroy itself in the blink of an eye, Charrière has captured some of the most extensive footage of the underwater perspective of the aftermath of nuclear testing. Looping ad infinitum, the five-minute video consists of a single camera sequence tracking a propeller swathed in seaweed of one of myriad ships resting on the ocean's floor, a static totem of the decay of scientific progress interrupted only by the occasional bubble.

On the right: Installation view, *As We Used to Float*, 2018, Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, Germany





# All We Ever Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere

2018

Diving bell made out of steel with stereo sound system, stainless steel structure, plastic bags, Pacific sea water, pulley-system, steel wire ropes

A looming metal structure supports the precise counterbalance of a multi-tonned diving bell, the likes of which allowed past generations to explore the ocean in a new way, weighted against plastic bags of sea water suspended above one's head in Julian Charrière's piece *All We Ever Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere*. As a part of his exploration into the history of the USA's nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands and the ensuing expedition to the Bikini Atoll, Charrière spent weeks filming the underwater graveyard of ships known as the Ghost Fleet, a series of vessels brought to the atoll by the Americans to test the atomic bombs and left to be consumed by the sea. Out from the diving bell spills the slowed, rhythmic breath of a diver underwater, isolated and shut off to himself yet apart of a larger. This moment of the self fading and becoming one with the universe, Freud's concept of the "oceanic feeling", is at the heart of all religion or spirituality, in which breath is associated with the soul and with God, the individual and the universal. *All We Ever Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere* thus links ancient scientific techniques for investigating and explaining the world with religious or spiritual ideas and rituals about the experience of a larger force, and it sinks both of these into a huge grave on the bottom of the Pacific Ocean by Bikini Atoll.

On the right: *All We Ever Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere*, 2018;  
Installation view, *All We Ever Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere*,  
2019, Mambo, Bologna, Italy



Above and on the right: *All We Ever Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere*, 2018;  
Installation view, *As We Used to Float*, 2018, Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, Germany



# I Am Afraid, I Must Ask You to Leave

with Julius von Bismarck

2018

Three-channel video installation, Full HD color video, 16:9 aspect ratio, 3.1 sound, 26'13"

[Watch video online](#) - Password: Z8wY6yXp



# In the Real World It Doesn't Happen That Perfectly

with Julius von Bismarck

2019

Multi-screen video installation (five-channel video loop plus one live news channel), Full HD color video, 16:9 aspect ratio, stereo sound, each channel 17'33"

[Watch video online](#) - Password: u2kJr4hv

In 2018 a video showing the destruction of several natural monuments of Utah's Arches National Park went viral in the United States. At the time the newly voted president of the United States - Donald Trump - announced the country's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on climate change; a Suiteable moment for the artists Julius von Bismarck and Julian Charrière - being behind the footage - to continue their artistic research on the perception and construction of nature as well as to explore notions of truth and authenticity. Utilizing the phantasmagorical boundlessness of the desert to stage a piece of fiction, the artists' fifth collaboration unfolds in three acts. In a very detail-oriented process arches and totemic hoodoos were re-created by a local production

team in a similar vast landscape in Mexico, far away from their original site, only to then blow them up in a single moment, which they filmed with a camera phone. The videos of the structures being blown up were anonymously posted to a number of websites known for released leaked content, alleging that they were taken in Utah by a group vaguely labelled as "extremists" or "ecoterrorists." Choosing a moment when the national parks were closed due to the Federal Government Shutdown, the video quickly gained over a million views. They have since been commented on by news agencies around the nation and internationally, which switched from the possibility of the videos being real to the allegation that they are digitally manipulated.



Above: Video stills, *In The Real World It Doesn't Happen That Perfectly*, 2019

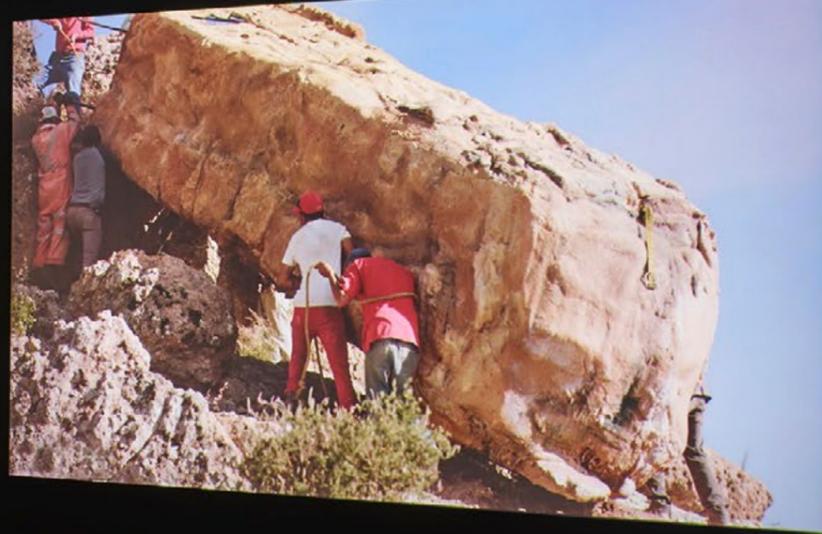
On the left: *We Must Ask You to Leave - Island in the Sky* (vertical viewpoint), 2018

On Next page: *We Must Ask You to Leave - Grand Staircase Escalante* (mountain view drive), 2018



Featuring two video installations – demonstrating the construction of the Arches in a three video channel installation titled *I Am Afraid, I Must Ask You to Leave* and another three video channel installation titled *In the Real World It Doesn't Happen That Perfectly* showing the reactions of prominent American television stations – as well as a photographic series, the multi-part piece comments on the peculiarity of humans to see natural monuments - that look as if they could have been designed by human minds - worthier of protection, highlights the absurdity of imitating ancient geological marvels forged over millennia with the only aim to destroy them through human intervention. By feeding the endless news cycle in such a way, the act of creating something fake only for it to be destroyed is repeated, calling into question experiential authenticity and perspective.









# An Invitation to Disappear

2018

Photographs

4K color film, 2.35:1 aspect ratio, Ambisonics

3D-soundscape, soundtrack by Inland, 76'44"

[Watch video online](#) - Password: aswn4K3S



*An Invitation to Disappear* is an expedition into the heart of the both dystopian and paradisiacal landscape of a palm oil plantation. Symptomatic of the current global derangement of ecological thinking, the face of a synthetic jungle reveals itself to us as it oscillates between natural and artificial, existing within a state in which nature and culture merge. The film and photographic series exist within a region where the man-made ashes of the cleared and burned primeval rainforest—one of the world's most notable carbon sinks—converge with a long-standing geological history of volcanic activity. The project is a response to the 200th anniversary of the eruption of the Tambora volcano in Indonesia, which plunged the world into darkness and extreme weather conditions—a climate-change crisis that was marked by many famines and known throughout the northern hemisphere as “the year without summer.” The eruption of Tambora in 1815 and its global consequences offer a clear view of a world shaken by extreme weather conditions wherein communities must adapt to sudden radical changes in temperature and weather. Parallels can be clearly drawn to our modern society currently confronted with anthropogenic climate change which may one day result in a “year without a winter.”

*Above:*

*An Invitation to Disappear - Sabah, 2018*

*On the left:*

*An Invitation to Disappear - Nagan Raya, 2018*

A rave set in an oil palm plantation in southeast Asia, the film *An Invitation to Disappear* sets up a shocking confrontation with false promises of global monocultures established to participate in a global economy which had previously exploited this land through colonialism. Juxtaposing industrial agriculture with rave culture, the film explores the subjection of some of the most diverse rainforest ecology in the world to logging, burning, mono-cropping and soil depletion in the short-term interests of economic development. From dusk to dawn, Julian Charrière takes us on a seemingly endless journey through a verdant palm oil plantation in Southeast Asia. Along with the natural ambient sound of the plantation, electronic music producer and DJ Inland (Ed Davenport) created a score in which he captures the essence and serial rhythm of the monoculture plantation with an architectural precision. Drawn steadily towards a dark mirage by the rising sound, the camera happens upon a scene of jubilant devastation—a stage framed by a DJ booth and tower speakers shrouded in a haze of flashing light and smoke. In the conspicuous absence of people, the party rages with mesmerizing intensity. The colorful light of the party fades into the first rays of the morning sun, as if leaving a club after sunrise or approaching a light after death.



On the right: Film stills, *An Invitation to Disappear*, 2018  
Next page: *An Invitation to Disappear*, 2018; Installation view,  
*An Invitation to Disappear*, 2018, Kunsthalle Mainz, Mainz, Germany





The photography series *An Invitation to Disappear*, captures the nuanced life of light in the wake of destruction. Brilliant fiery hues burst through smoke, diffusing and swirling around silhouetted trees of the palm oil plantation. Though artificially induced, these images allude to the after-effects of Tambora's eruption during which particles known as aerosols filled the entire earth's atmosphere, causing the twilight hours to be marked by startling afterglows of pink, purple, red, and orange. Struck by the epic sublimity of these moments, European painters like JMW Turner and Caspar David Friedrich created a visual legacy of the ensuing volcanic winter. As epitomized by industrial ventures like palm oil production, it is now the deeds of mankind which alter the world's environment more severely than nature itself. Charrière's tight shots of the palm trees situated within their claustrophobic grid invoke a certain unnamed anxiety of the world being caught in the midst of an unsustainable desire to cater to the global economy in which palm oil can be found in almost 50% of all supermarket goods, unbeknownst to the majority of consumers. Rather than fall into ignorant complacency, Charrière uses this photography series to turn tragedy into a much more approachable dark sort of beauty.





# To Observe Is to Influence

2018

**Wall Drawing:** Ash from rainforest, volcanic ash, spray-glue

**Wall Object:** Carbonized teak plank with laser engraving

Ash black as death collected from felled Southeast Asian jungles takes on a new life in Julian Charrière's artwork *To Observe Is to Influence*. Consuming the wall in a brutal block, the soot makes its mark in the form of a collage composed of botanical etchings made by nineteenth century British naturalist, Alfred Russel Wallace, and his peers. Hundreds of those etchings depict the plant life native to regions of Southeast Asia where Wallace discovered the biogeographical border affecting flora and fauna running through the Malay Archipelago, now known as the Wallace line. Many details of the drawings are understood only through very fine traces of the soot, alluding to the rapid disappearance of the biodiversity which the naturalists and botanists so meticulously documented due to the rise of monoculture palm oil plantations. Not only has this region been altered ecologically but also aesthetically: where chaotic randomness previously ran rampant now exists submissive squares of cultivated cash crops.



Julian Charrière's *To Observe Is to Influence* takes form as a series of totemic teak pillars that have been incised and burnt over with imagery of rainforests based on the prints of Alfred Russel Wallace, the 19th century British explorer, biologist, and anthropologist. During his field work in the Malay Archipelago, Wallace identified the faunal boundary between Asian and Australian regions of Indonesia, now referred to as the Wallace Line, and was one of the first scientist to warn of the consequences of deforestation on the climate, particularly in the rainforest. Charrière recalls a natural scientific past to examine the contemporary quandaries of the physical world as exacerbated by mankind. In keeping with the objectivity of the sciences his work purposefully offers no judgements or solutions.



Above: Detail, *To Observe Is to Influence*, 2018  
On the right and following page: *To Observe Is to Influence*, 2018





# Ever Since We Crawled Out

2018

HD b/w-video loop, found footage, 4:3 aspect ratio, stereo sound, 06'47"

[Watch video online](#) - Password: nsxk3NDv



*Ever Since We Crawled Out* is a video by Julian Charrière that confronts the tumultuous relationship between humans and the finite resources the planet has to offer. Using black-and-white found footage from film archives, the video highlights this topic through an endless montage of countless trees being chopped down, one after another after another—lingering on the climactic seconds before the trees succumb to gravity and meet their end on the ground. Creaking and moaning as they resist their fate, we are shown a process which we benefit from everyday but rarely think of the difficult process which yields our conveniences. As the crack widens almost like the mouth of a gluttonous figure preparing to consume

something large, you can see the age lines of the tree, the time line of an individual which makes up an environment rapidly being destroyed, presumably for the sake of enterprise and commerce, either to be turned into pulp or to merely clear the valuable land. Once one tree starts falling, they all tumble like dominos. People only appear in a handful of shots—running, afraid to be confronted with the reality of their actions. After the trees fall, take a moment to settle, stray leaves falling down after it, an eerie silence only disturbed by the sound of wind rushing through the remaining trees which will be the next to go.



On previous page: *Ever Since We Crawled Out*, 2018; Installation view, *An Invitation to Disappear*, 2018, Kunsthalle Mainz, Mainz, Germany  
Video stills, *Ever Since We Crawled Out*, 2018



# Tambora

2018

**Belt sander, abrasive belt made from minerals from Mount Tambora**

Julian Charrière's artwork *Tambora* revives the form of a previous work with a mounted sand belt vainly spinning to no avail. A blur of black, there is no sand on the belt but rather the inky soot of Southeast Asian rainforest felled to plant dizzying grids of palm oil trees. By clearing the forest, ancient stores of carbon dioxide are released into the atmosphere, one of the leading causes of climate change, in addition to destroying one of the most ecologically diverse regions in the world. Charrière's fascination began as he was investigating the 1816 eruption of the titular Tambora volcano and the environment catastrophes that plagued the world in the years following as the global temperatures plummeted, resulting in what is known as "*The Year Without a Summer*." In the throngs of a globalized marketplace set on cheap fillers like palm oil, which is found in almost 50% of all grocery goods, despite their evident environmental impact, the world may one day see a year without a winter.



# The Other Side of Eden

2018

Heavy duty shelf, stainless steel EUR pallets, palm fat

Referring to the industrial processing of palm oil, with *The Other Side of Eden* Julian Charrière transposes the grid-like structure of the palm oil plantation with a display of stainless steel pallets filled with repetitious blocks of pressed palm oil. What life existed within the luscious artificial maze of the plantation has been forced into sickly, almost artificial shades of orange filler, along the way burning an ancient forest and unearthing centuries of carbon dioxide. Locked into a pattern of unexamined consumerism out of convenience, ignoring the potential environmental consequences, companies are putting this cheap filler into everything from cosmetics, to ice cream and biofuels.





# It Was Hard Not to Be Preoccupied by the Fire and the Nightfall

2018

Diesel engine, power generator, palm oil, fog machine

Like a mechanical heart, beating and pulsing, a generator fueled by some blood-like substance, Julian Charrière's *It Was Hard Not to Be Preoccupied by the Fire and the Nightfall*, recontextualizes the many roles of palm oil on a global scale. Every so often its loud thrumming shivers out in exasperated sighs of cool smoke, shrouding the room in a way that both chills and mystifies. The irony of the smoke's chilling effect—both physically and visually—is that the very process by which the oil was harvested is a considerable factor in modern climate change as burning the original rainforest to clear way for palm oil plantations releases ancient stores of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. As its ubiquity and ultimately demand increases, palm oil continues to fuel the global economy created around it while the majority of consumers are unknowingly supporting it as well.



*It Was Hard Not to Be Preoccupied by the Fire and the Nightfall*, 2018; Installation view, *An Invitation To Disappear*, 2018, Kunsthalle Mainz, Mainz, Germany

# Love-In

2018

Borosilicate glass, stainless steel, lamp,  
palm oil, isopropanol, distilled water

Providing warmth and a fiery glow, *Love-In* consists of an oversized glass pillar held in place by a metal framework resembling scientific lab equipment. Inside the test tube, crude palm oil—red as magma—is heated from the bottom, forming viscous bubbles which psychedelically ebb and flow throughout the vessel. This metabolic process showcases the constant state of flux of the South East Asian environment from which the palm oil originates. Global demand for palm oil fuels forest fires that burn annually during the late-summer dry season, blanketing a vast area of the Asian Pacific region in toxic haze and destroying an important carbon sink, just as the eruption of Mount Tambora had affected the global ecosystem centuries ago. Amidst this multilayered ecological crisis, which encompasses issues of species extinction, environmental justice, and anthropogenic climate change, this project redresses a failure of cultural imagination to comprehend the inter-dependency of local and global geophysical conditions and the human fingerprint upon them. Collectively consumers remain unaware of the prevalence of palm oil in their daily lives and its destructive production process.



On this page: Detail, *Love-In*, 2019

On right page: Installation view, *Love-In*, 2019, *Twin Earth*, SALTS,  
Birsfelden, Switzerland





# Future Fossil Spaces

2014-2017

Salt bricks from Salar de Uyuni, acrylic-containers filled with lithium brine



*Future Fossil Spaces* is part of a global reflection by Julian Charrière on the digital era and the materials which allow for the advent of a period of ever increasing dematerialization. Utilizing salt and its resulting lithium brine from the Salar de Uyuni, the world's largest salt flat, the artist has created an installation of towering salt-brick columns and lithium containers which oscillate between topography and landscape. Located in the Bolivian Andes, the Salar de Uyuni holds one-third of Earth's lithium reserves and remains largely unexploited—something which will likely make it the main production site of this increasingly precious element in the next decades as our dependence on lithium-fueled technology exponentially increases. Each brick stacked on top of another resembles the age lines of strata, reminding the viewer of the lengthy geological processes which lead to these resources as juxtaposed against the potential rapid destruction of this environment. The title *Future Fossil Spaces* refers to future negative spaces that will be carved in the earth by these mining operations, traces of how the digital era will mar the physical which sustains it, effectively demonstrating how the enlargement of the virtual world requires a hollowing-out of the world of natural resources.

On this and next page: *Future Fossil Spaces*, 2017; Installation view, *Viva Arte Viva*, 2017, *La Biennale di Venezia*, Venice, Italy

On the page after: *Future Fossil Spaces*, 2016; Installation view, *For They That Sow the Wind*, 2016, Parasol Unit, London, UK







On this page: *Future Fossil Spaces*, 2014; Installation view, *Future Fossil Spaces*, 2014, Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne, Switzerland

# Pacific Fiction - Study for Monument

2016

Coconuts in lead sarcophagi, steel frame



*Pacific Fiction - Study for Monument* is a sculpture which serves as a putative model for a future memorial paying tribute to the people of the Marshall Islands and their suffering brought upon by the nuclear tests conducted by the United States government as a part of the Nuclear Arms Race. The work incorporates a pile of coconuts encased in lead symbolizing the traumatic embrace of this region by the atomic project; the lead coating suggestive of smothering—registering a profound colonial imposition. In addition to this, the sculpture reflects upon safety and hope: in physical terms, lead “contains” the danger posed by the radiation present within the coconuts. The pyramid form further recalls a stockpile of cannonballs—this “fruit” of atomic knowledge standing ready for deployment, for good or ill. But it also invokes a tomb, like the pyramids of Egypt, and the deathly architecture of the bunkers on the shores of Bikini’s atoll from which scientists observed their nuclear tests.

On this page: Detail, *Pacific Fiction - Study for Monument*, 2016  
On left and next page: *Pacific Fiction - Study for Monument*, 2016;  
Installation view, *First Light*, 2016, Galerie Tschudi, Zuoz, Switzerland





# First Light

2016

Large format color photographs,  
double-exposed through radioactive material

Charrière's series of large-format photographic prints of typically idyllic tropical island scenes, *First Light*, explores the fraught interactions between industrial modernity and geography—addressing the atomic landscape and post-colonial ecology of Bikini Atoll. It uses the geographical context to explore another type of garden or paradise, one created and devised as a media mechanism of desire. This paradise acts almost as a metaphysical state of being, one which, through media's extended use of its image, immediately takes us to a place of comfort, relaxation, neon

sunset colors, and coconut trees. Depicting water, palms, beaches and horizons, strata from nuclear "hot" sites have been placed on the large-format color negatives during their development process, documenting and reenacting the subliminal beauty present in the atrocities that shook the Marshall Islands during America's nuclear testing in the Cold War, whilst playing with modern ideas of relaxation and commodity culture. These prints oscillate between the peaceful cliché of tropical sunset photography and the destructive beauty issuing from atomic "second suns."

On this page:

1 *Sycamore* - *First Light*, 2016

2 *Redwing II* - *First Light*, 2016

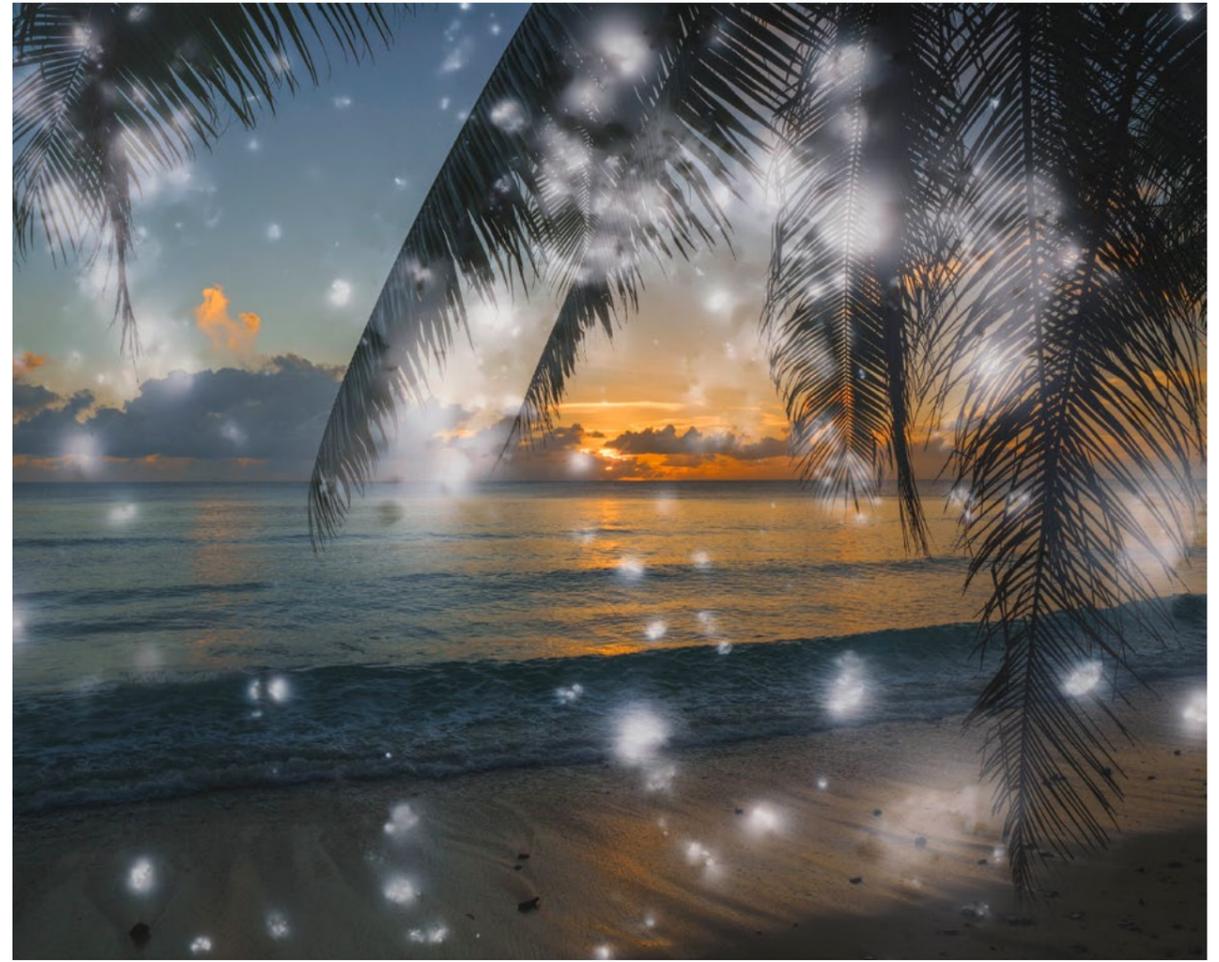
3 *Aspen* - *First Light*, 2016

Previous page: *Poplar* - *First Light*, 2016

On next page: *Tewa* - *First Light*, 2016



1



2



3



# Empire

2019

Dog sledge, coconuts in lead sarcophagi

The coconuts, collected during the stay on the Marshall Islands, which are coated in lead afterwards, are witnesses to the nuclear tests carried out by the Americans in the 1950s as the beginning of a new era, also symbolizing the traumatic embrace of this region by the atom project. Mounted on a sledge from Greenland, almost sinking from its ballast into the melting ice and rising sea level, the work *Empire* tells of the destructive power of humans, whose effects extend from the Bikini Atoll to glacial landscapes. The means of transport created by humans themselves threatens to perish, and with its demise comes the extinction and erase of cultures.

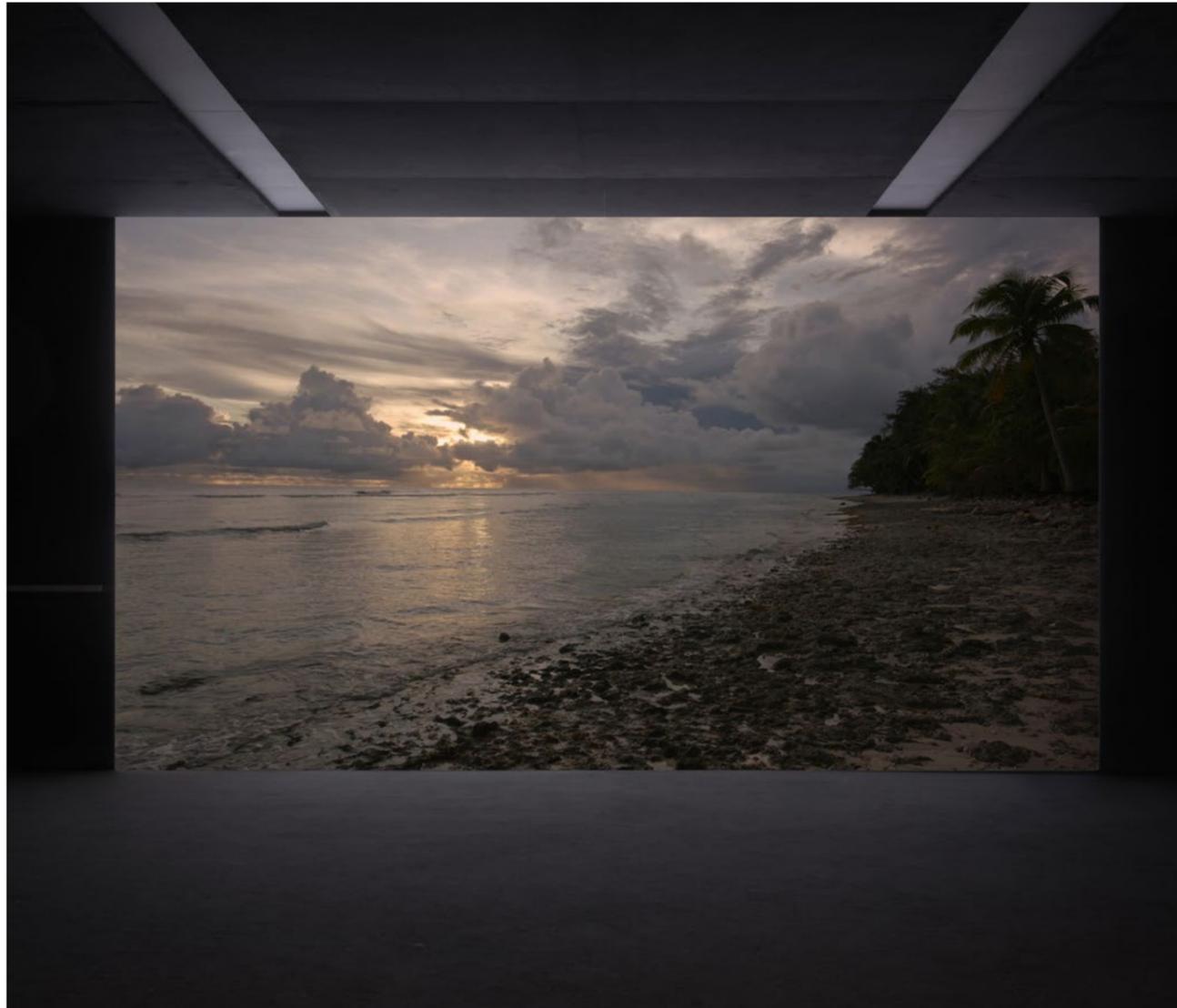


# Iroojrilik

2016

4K color film, 16:9 aspect ratio, stereo sound, sound by Edward Davenport, 21'03"

[Watch video online](#) - Password: 4jR4Gb64



Charrière's video work captures the structures' of the Bikini Atolls' atomic-industrial architecture decay, its manner of editing further suggesting morphological overlaps with the monstrous wrecks lying on the bottom of the Bikini Atoll lagoon, assailed by tide and time. Making no use of archival material—its original underwater images captured at depths far below standard dive profiles—Iroojrilik is unquestionably the most unique, and comprehensive, perspective on the maritime ruins of Bikini ever put together. Yet, rather than explicating individual vessels or buildings, the cumulative impression given is that of an Atlantis or lost civilization—architectural features of one ship cut together with those of others, such that it appears as though a submerged

mega-structure has been discovered. On a more general note, the film employs another series of elisions and substitutions. Through a series of montages, mixing sunsets and sunrises, it proposes an uncertain distinction between daybreak and night fall—first light of a new day in Pacific history, and the waning of another. Visions of multiple suns and endless dawns stretch across the horizon. Pictorial energies shift and sway, like palm trees and coral ferns growing on cannon mounts, between construction and destruction, transporting the viewer to a “non-place,” or the beginning of a brave new world.

Above: *Iroojrilik*, 2016; Installation view, *As We Used to Float*, 2018, Berlinische Galerie, Berlin, Germany

On the right: Film stills, *Iroojrilik*, 2016

On next page: *Iroojrilik*, 2016; Installation view, *All We Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere*, 2019, MAMbo, Bologna, Italy





# Terminal Beach

2016

Large format black-and-white photographs,  
double-exposed through radioactive material

Like Charrière's series *Polygon*, these black and white works recall the objective style of the Dusseldorf School while surveying the apotheosis of mid-century atomic-industrial architecture. With their rusting iron rebar and crumbling concrete, now falling like flakes—prey to salt air and, once, unimaginable vibrations—some of these structures recall pyramids; odious leftovers of a questionable ideal.

On this page:

*Aomen I - Terminal Beach*, 2016

1 *Aomen III - Terminal Beach*

2 *Aomen IV - Terminal Beach*

3 *Aomen II - Terminal Beach*

On next page:

*Eneman I - Terminal Beach*, 2016



2



1



3





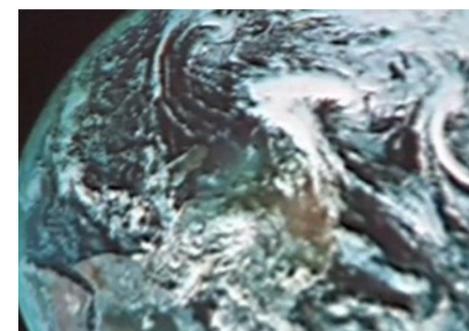
# Objects in Mirror Might Be Closer Than They Appear

with Julius von Bismarck

2016

Full HD color film, 4:3 aspect ratio, stereo sound, double-projection on semitransparent mirror foil, 12'42"

[Watch video online](#) - Password: vUPGY3sU



Above: Film stills, *Objects in Mirror Might Be Closer Than They Appear*, 2016  
On the left: *Objects in Mirror Might Be Closer Than They Appear II*, 2016



*Objects in Mirror Might Be Closer Than They Appear* is a collaboration between Julian Charrière and Julius von Bismarck. This project was shot in the Exclusion Zone, an area stretching 30 kilometers in all directions centered on the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant whose explosion in 1986 rendered the land uninhabitable. The series is an excursion into the “involuntary park” which this region has become—a glimpse into a non-human space overrun by wildlife and forest as seen through the perspective of a living deer made possible by mounting a camera onto a deer’s antlers and directed towards its eye. What is then seen is the reflection of the landscape onto the animal’s retina: a mixture of an invisibly decaying but thriving natural ecosystem and the ruins left by the humans that once dominated this space, rejected infrastructures of a forgotten nuclear past. The deformed image, a direct product of the curvature of the animal’s ocular perception system, serves as a metaphor to an altered present, an altered environment in which these animals now live. These images dialogue within the piece with found footage of the first spacial mission, the subjectivity of the astronaut looking at the earth from above directly responds to the subjective perspective of the deer itself.

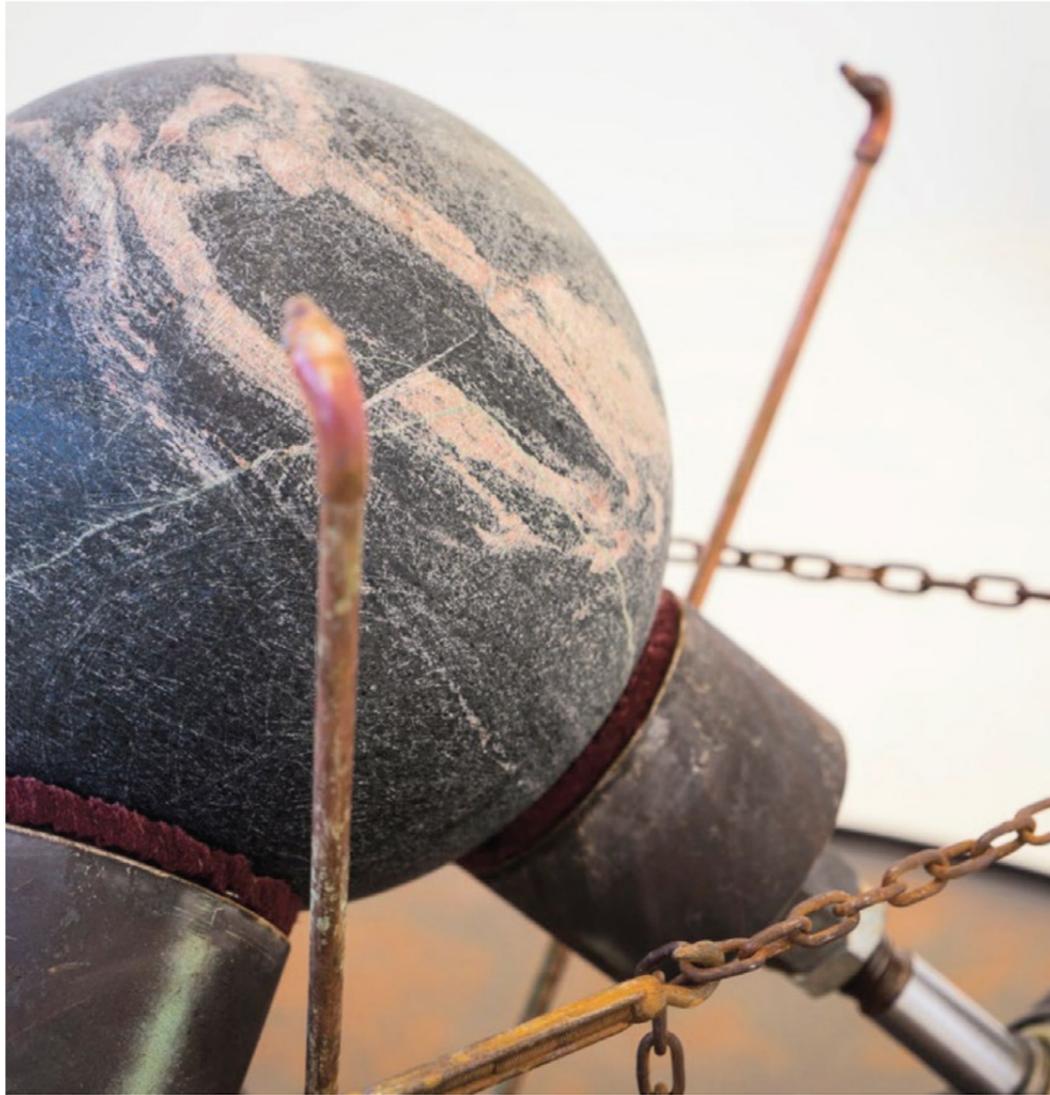
On this page: *Objects in Mirror Might Be Closer Than They Appear*, 2016; Installation view  
Art Basel Unlimited, 2017, Basel, Switzerland  
On right page: *Objects in Mirror Might Be Closer Than They Appear VIII*, 2016



# Weight of Time

2016

Acasta Gneiss, steel, copper, aluminium, water, pumping system, motors



*Weight of Time* features a large lump of the oldest known material in the world—not produced for some four billion years, three billion before the advent of multicellular life—being ground into a sphere by a juddering machine grinder. In this violent mechanical operation one recognizes a stark image for industrialization's morbid embrace of the globe. But the work also foregrounds a distant past, before mankind. As a conceptual gesture, this sculpture-as-arche-fossil nods to times long after the moment of viewing—and perhaps after humanity. Slowly but surely billions of years are erased; the polished surface of the stone reaches a platonic perfection slowly getting dissociated from its mineral origin.

On this and on next page:

*Weight of Time*, 2016; Installation view, *Pitch Drop*, 2016, Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf, Germany





# Pitch Drop

2016

Bitumen, stainless steel, borosilicate glass

Initiated in 1927, the Pitch Drop Experiment demonstrates the fluid dynamics of tar, a highly viscous liquid. Appropriating the technical format of this slow-motion theater, this performing sculpture changes and drips approximately once every decade. As a time-based artwork that may play out over centuries, beyond the individual human life span, it gestures toward a geological timescale and an aesthetic scope that expands well beyond the here and now.



# A Sky Taste of Rock

2016

Heliography on high-polished stainless steel plate, tiltable stainless steel frame



This series of photographic works by Julian Charrière employs the medium's oldest technique first developed by French inventor Nicéphore Niépce in 1822. Using bitumen collected from the oil fields in Fort McMurray, Canada, a light-sensitive emulsion has been created to process images taken at the oil fields onto polished stainless-steel plates. Each piece is a diptych of one aerial shot and one long exposure to the late summer, Canadian light by way of Camera Obscura. Numbers featured in the title correspond to the geographic coordinates where the photographs were taken. The series stands as a conceptual mise en abyme: a view of and from the flow of hydrocarbons, addressing their impact on our modern powers of visualization through a return to material sources.

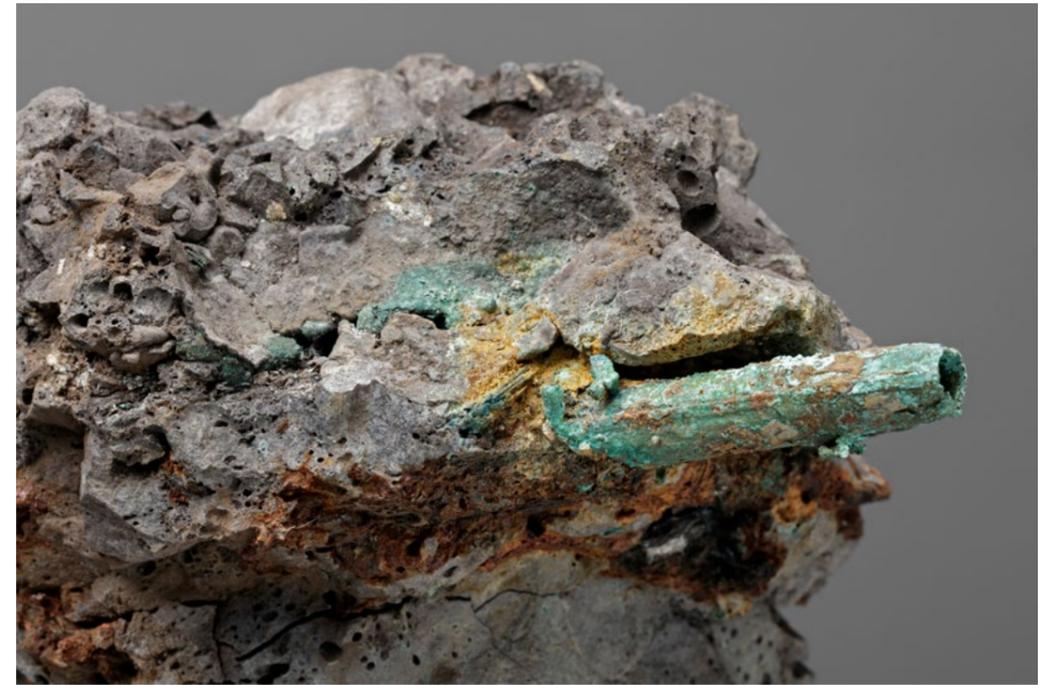
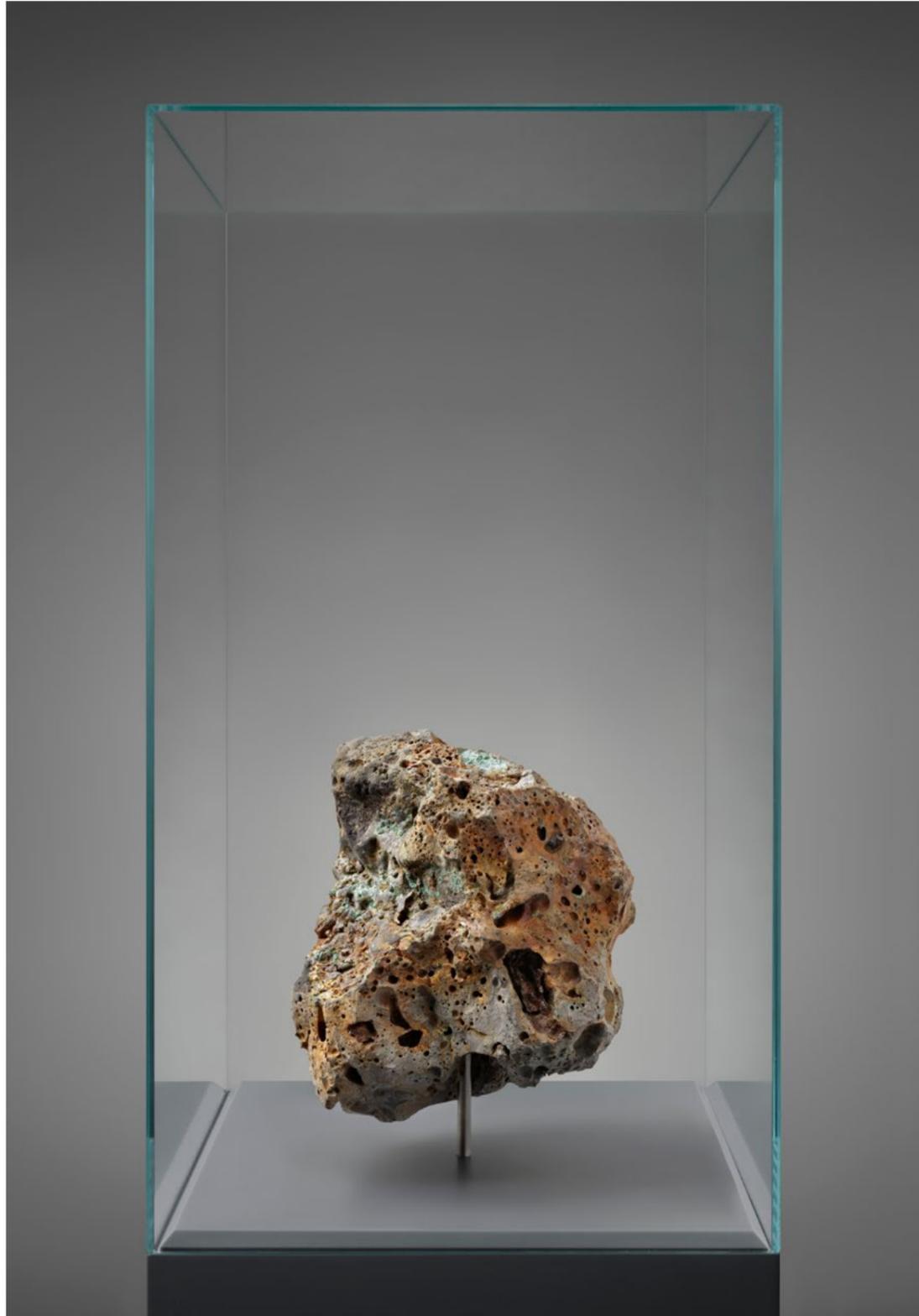




# Metamorphism

2016

Artificial lava, molten computer waste, Corian pedestal, steel, white glass



1



2

Displayed in vitrines like topological fragments from a futuristic natural history museum, *Metamorphism* is an amalgam of cultural memories incorporated into a geological matrix.

For this piece internal elements from various technological devices (main boards, hard drives, CPUs, RAMs, etc. from laptop computers and smartphones) have been molten in an artificial lava, returning them to their geological origins. Beautiful aesthetic objects in their own right, these magnificent polychromatic sculptures reflect upon the mining and use of raw materials and the future of our civilization's artificial by-products.

On the left: Installation view, *Metamorphism XXIV, Into The Hollow*, 2016, Dittrich & Schlechtriem, Berlin, Germany

Above:  
1 Detail, *Metamorphism XIV*, 2016  
2 Detail, *Metamorphism XLIV*, 2016

On next pages:  
Installation view, *Metamorphism XVIII*, 2016 *Into The Hollow*, 2016, Dittrich & Schlechtriem, Berlin, Germany and Detail, *Metamorphism XII*, 2016

On last page:  
Installation view, *Metamorphism*, 2016, *Freeze, Memory*, 2016, Sean Kelly Gallery, New York City, USA



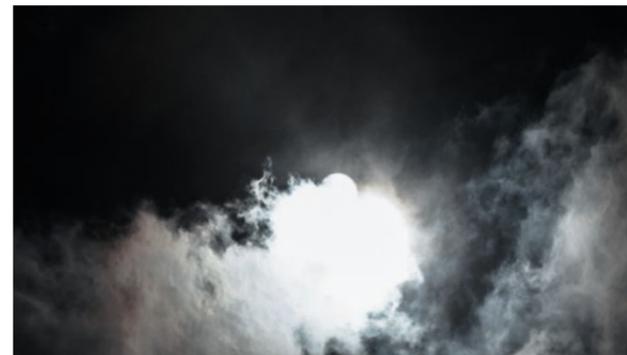
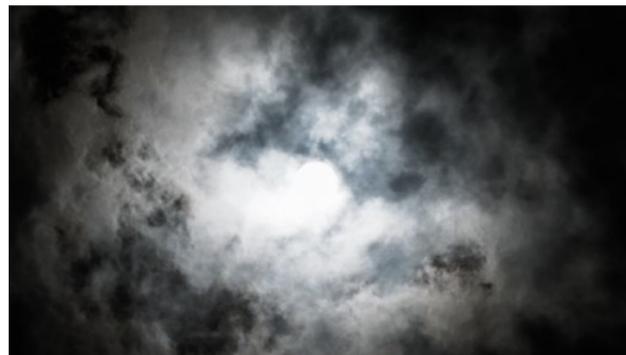


# Somewhere

2014

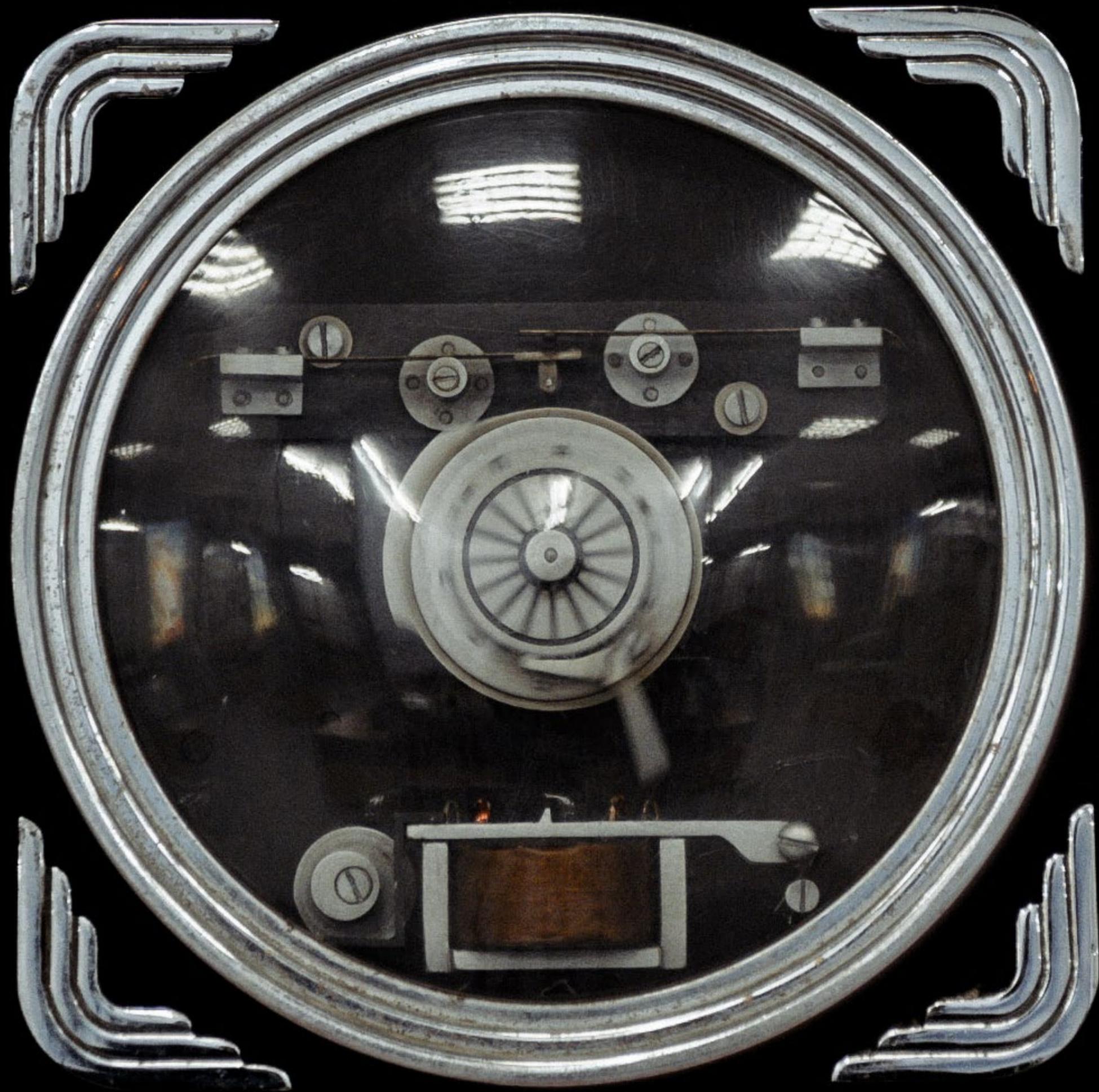
Full HD color film, 16:9 aspect ratio, stereo sound, sound by Edward Davenport, 16'21"

[Watch video online](#) - Password: K7D9cvRb



Transporting the viewer into a world of post-atomic aftermaths, Charrière's 2014 film *Somewhere* revolves around the Soviet nuclear test site, Semipalatinsk. In its meditative, trance-like style he embeds the somber mood of the test site, simultaneously referencing the cinematography of science-fiction films. The landscape is punctured by man-made scars, the remaining buildings from the test site, the forever reminders of the past. These objects are among the first unintended permanent monuments of the anthropocene—a post-human architecture of the bomb located in an environment too toxic for people to visit safely for longer than thirty minutes without protective gear. Like a broken sundial, the structures spiral outwards, arranged to gauge the intensity of nuclear explosions. The film shifts from eye-level views, soaring through the sky until it reaches the sun in a blaze of fire, everything consumed by an overwhelming white glow. What may have appeared as temples to scientific progress are now seen as merely rocks in the grass—the myth Icarus made concrete.





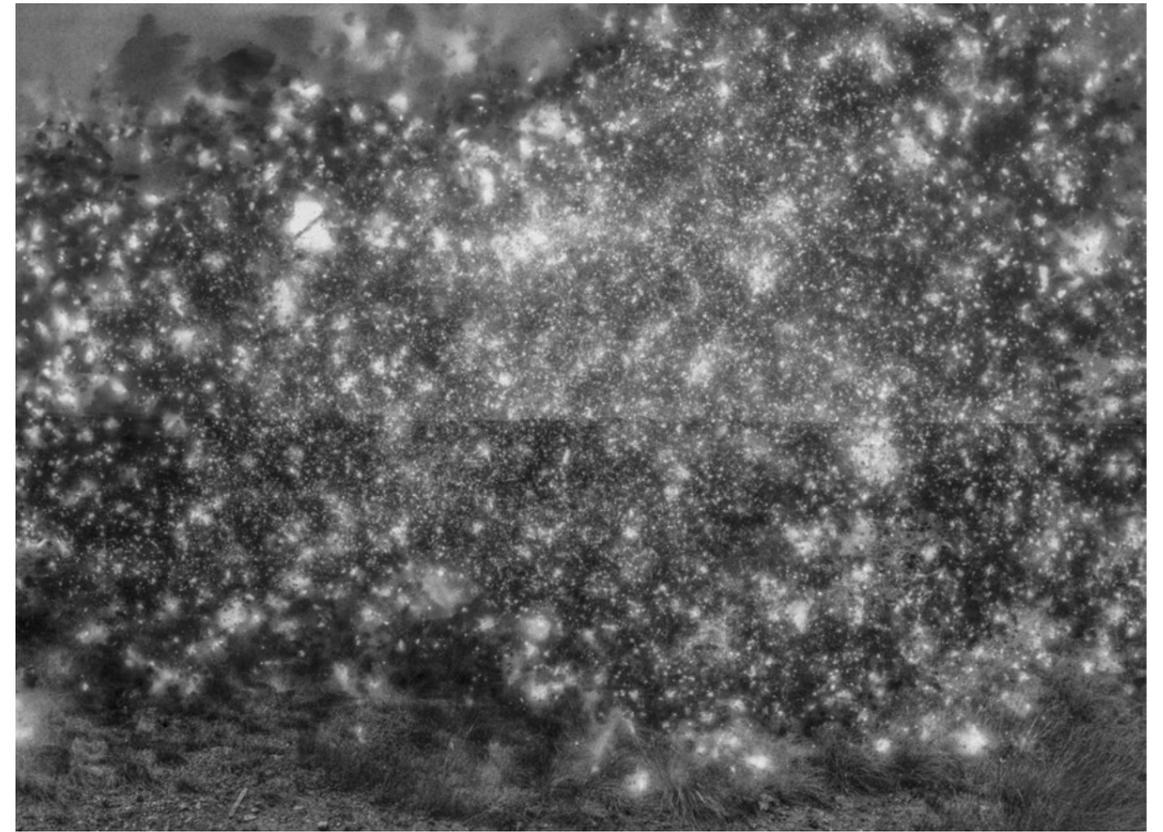


# Polygon

2014

Medium format black-and-white photographs, double-exposed through radioactive material

Julian Charrière's photographic series *Polygon* reveals the U.S.S.R.'s nuclear test site, Semipalatinsk, as a post-apocalyptic and violently melancholic site: a shrine for a ruined future. Using black-and-white analogue, medium-format film to capture the remaining vestiges of the test site, he successfully records the architectural legacy of the birth of the atomic age. The monolithic buildings tower over the rolling hills with the same menacing impact of watchtowers, fully guarded. Before each photograph was developed, thermonuclear strata was scattered on the negative, creating light spots showing the unseen forces which continually act on the landscape pictured. This effect which radioactivity renders on film was first discovered in 1896 by French physicist Henri Becquerel when storing photographic negatives and uranium salts in the same dark drawer. Exposing the film stock to radioactive material destroys one mode of visual information while at the same time adding another. The result is a doubly synthetic topography. The energy of the past infects the present, and will continue to warp the future. Semipalatinsk is future fossil space.



1



2

1 *Polygon IV*, 2014  
2 *Polygon III*, 2014





# Tropisme

2014

Cryogenized plants, refrigerated showcase



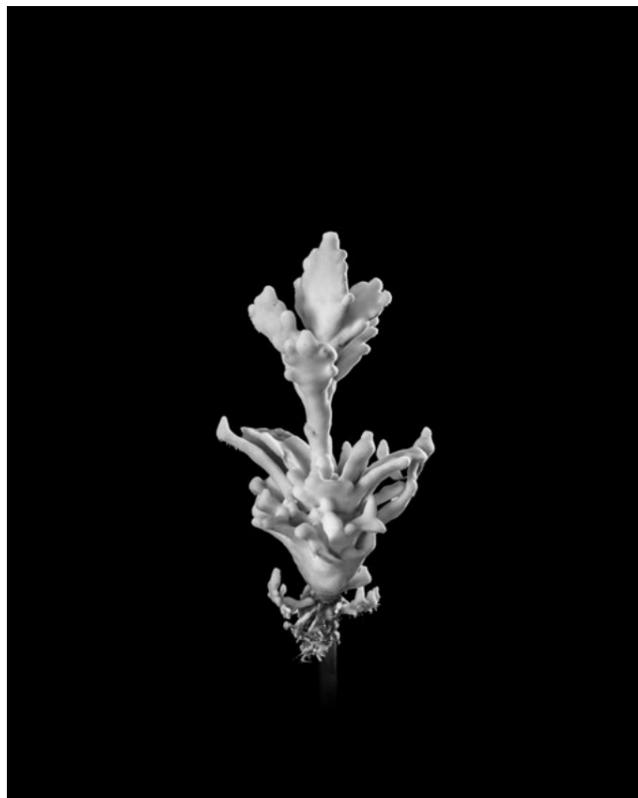
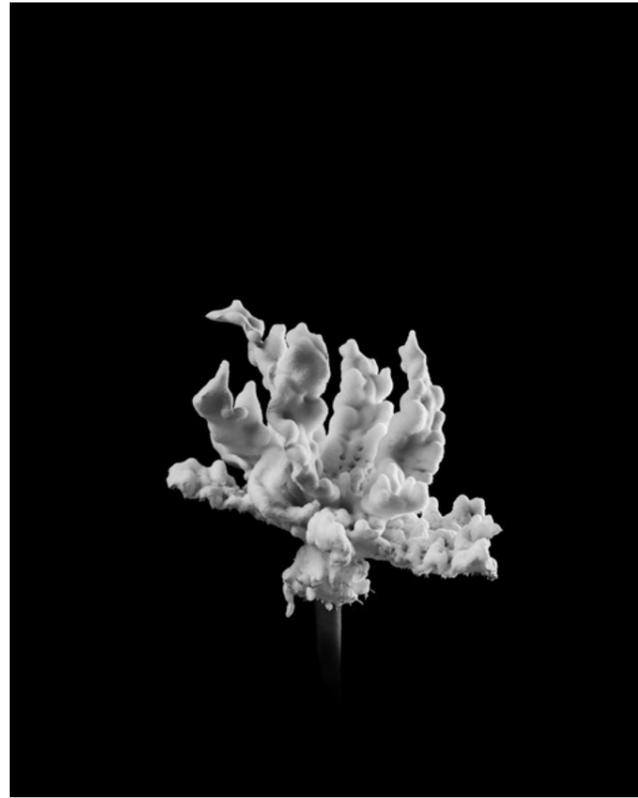
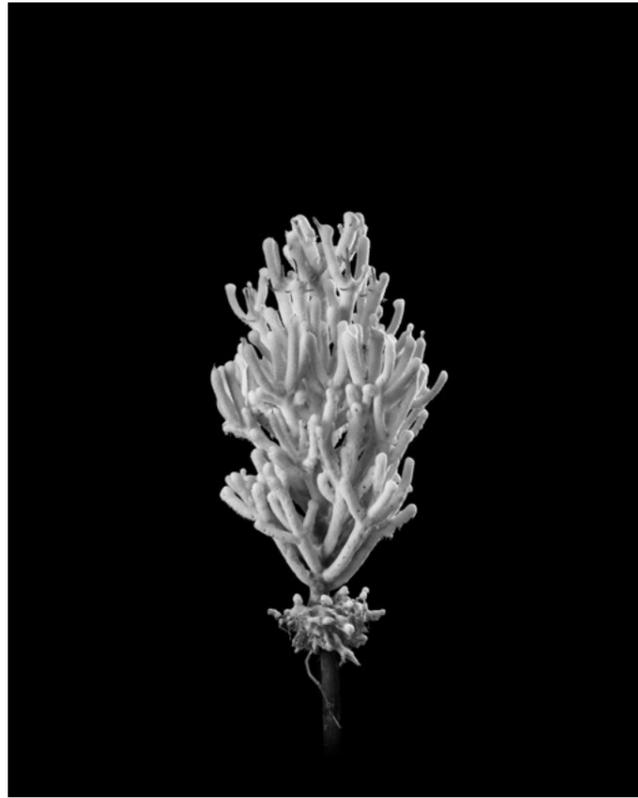
Tropisme consists of a refrigerated showcase in which Julian Charrière has deposited plants captured in a sheath of ice as if time could be stopped, and the plants might be preserved and archived for future use. In this frozen landscape, the vitality of matter is protected exothermically from the forces of entropy and decay. But the organisms also point backwards in time, towards the inception of ancient molecular memories. The plants (orchids, cactuses, etc.) are testimony to a geological period—the Cretaceous—which saw the extinction of dinosaurs. The artist thus freezes them like remains from a time whose memory forever escapes us, except maybe in some remaining part of our “reptilian” brain.

Above: *Tropisme*, 2015; Installation view, *First Light*, 2016, Galerie Tschudi, Zuoz, Switzerland

On the right and previous page:

*Tropisme*, 2015; Installation view, *Biotopia*, 2017, Kunsthalle Mainz, Mainz, Germany









# Clockwork

with Julius von Bismarck

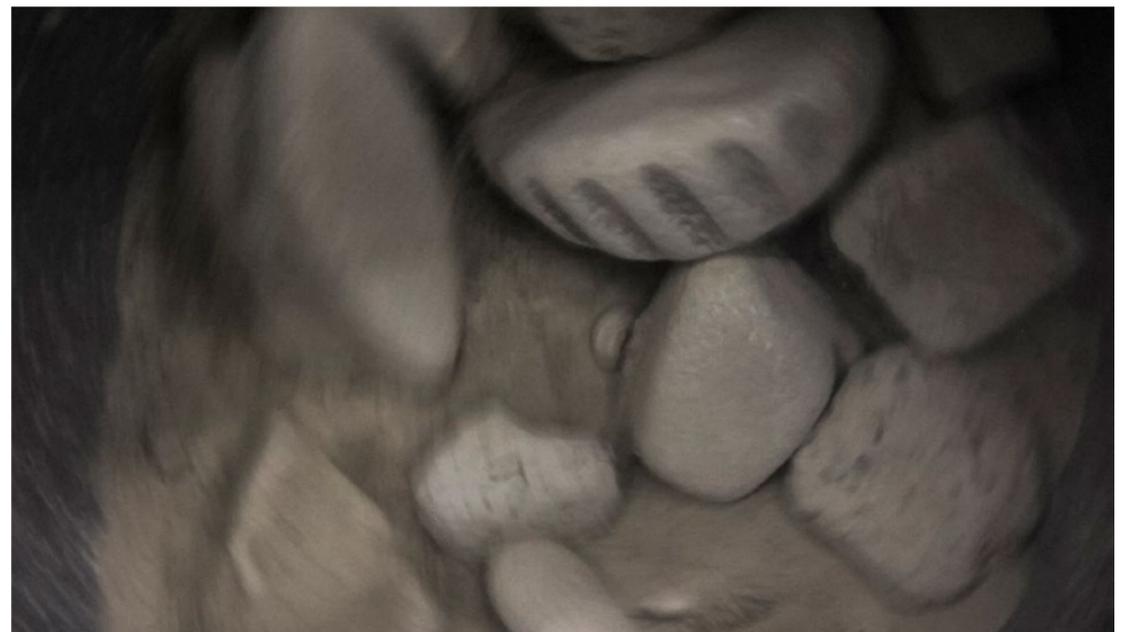
2014

Concrete mixers, bricks and debris from surrounding architectures



Julian Charrière and Julius von Bismarck's installation *Clockwork*, examines how the physical manifestations of past and future artificially interact with one another through the manipulation of humans. Fragments from various man-made constructions, stones taken from nature which had been formed into geometrical— primarily rectangular— shapes by human action for the purpose of building architecture, were collected as the two artists mapped urban environments through their materiality. A city's narrative is told through its rock and soil as they act simultaneously as a storage of natural and cultural history: from earth to brick and from brick to culture. Twelve concrete mixers arranged in a circle accelerate the omnipresent process of decay as they return the blocks' unnaturally constructed angles to rounded forms. The mixers create a team of "erosion-machines," subverting their original purpose by creating objects of a post-human condition linked to a past natural-state.

Previous page: *Clockwork*, 2014; Installation view, *Clockwork*, 2014, Oben, Vienna, Austria  
On this page and next page: *Clockwork*, 2014; Installation view, *INVENTO I As Revolucoes que nos Inventaram*, 2015, OCA - Parque do Ibirapuera, Sao Paulo, Brazil  
On the right: Detail, *Clockwork*, 2014





# The Key to the Present Lay in the Future

2014

13 broken hourglasses containing ground fossils from the Archaic, Proterozoic, Cambrium, Ordovicien, Silur, Devon, Carboniferous, Perm, Trias, Jurassic, Cretaceous, Tertiary, Paleogene and Neogene periods

*The Key to the Present Lay in the Future* is made of thirteen hourglasses containing sand from thirteen geological periods, thrown against a wall by the artist Julian Charrière. All which is left from these eras are suddenly brought together in the same place and time as a result of a powerful act yielding glass debris and sandy remnants. The hourglass itself is already a well-constructed metonymy of the link between time and space since it allows an interval of time to be measured by the movement of matter. The work echoes that of Robert Smithson, and in particular his thoughts on the issue of non-sites, and recalls one of his works in particular, *Hypothetical Continent (Map of Broken Glass: Atlantis)*, created in 1969, a pile of glass fragments which make up the fictitious map of a lost continent.



# We Are All Astronauts

2013

Found globes made of glass, plastic and paper; abraded with sandpaper made from international mineral specimens, abraded dust from globes' surfaces, MDF-tabletop



*We Are All Astronauts*, whose title is inspired by the writing of Buckminster Fuller, is composed of world globes stripped clean of their geographic information. Dating from 1890 to 2011, the artist has sanded away the globes' varying successive and shifting geopolitical contours using "international sandpaper" created with mineral samples from all U.N. recognized countries, which the artist originally collected for one of his previous works, *Monument – Sedimentation Of Floating Worlds* (2013). Dust created by the abrasion gently settles beneath the globes, creating new, yet-to-be-defined cartographies. The globes are rendered as useless as their carefully drawn territories in an increasingly globalized world bound less and less by borders.

On this page and next page: *We Are All Astronauts*, 2020; Installation view, *Towards No Earthly Pole*, 2020, Aargauer Kunsthau, Aarau, Switzerland

On left page: *We Are All Astronauts*, 2014; Installation view, *We Are All Astronauts*, 2014, Centre Culture Suisse, Paris, France





On this page: *I Do Not Remember Those Dusty Deserts*, 2013; Installation view, Universität der Künste, Berlin, Germany  
On right page: Detail, *We Are All Astronauts*, 2014; Installation view, *An Invitation to Disappear*, 2018, Kunsthalle Mainz, Mainz, Germany

# Somehow, They Never Stop Doing What They Always Did

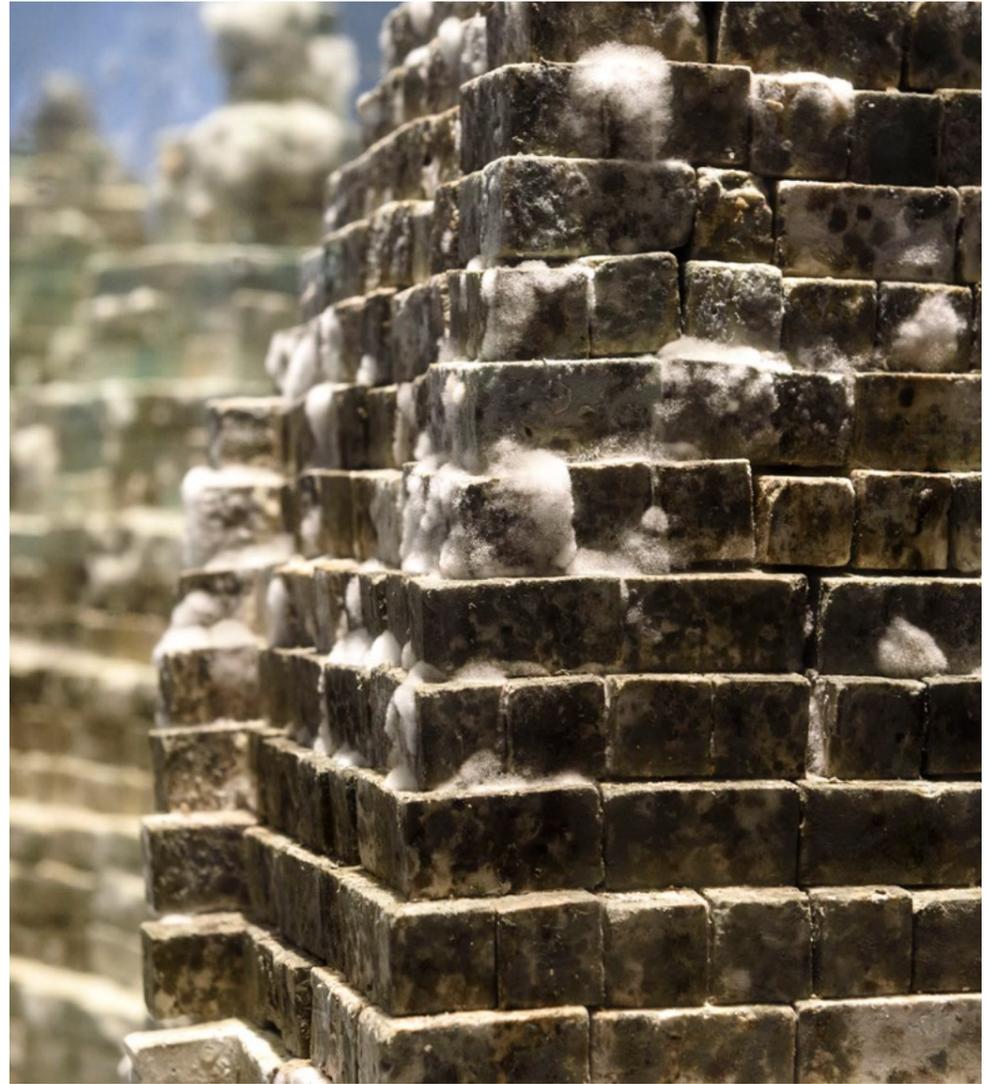
2013

Nutrient enriched plaster, water specimens from various rivers, stainless steel vitrine, double-glazed windows



On this and next page:  
*Somehow, They Never Stop Doing What They Always Did*, 2013; Installation view, *Des Présents Inachevés*, Les Modules du Palais  
Tokyo, 2013, 12th Biennale de Lyon, Lyon, France





With *Somehow, They Never Stop Doing What They Always Did*, Julian Charrière creates architectural structures whose surface is gradually covered by patterns of decomposing matter. Inside a steel and glass showcase, the artist displays small bricks made of plaster, fructose, and lactose, which are moistened with water from major civilizational rivers (the Saône, the Nile, the Yangtze, the Euphrates, etc.). Bacteria and mold progressively grow under the protection of the glass case. These constructions evoke mythological towers or architectural archetypes like the Tower of Babel. Through their rapid degradation they seem to actually belong to history.

On this page and next page: *Somehow, They Never Stop Doing What They Always Did*, 2013; Installation View, *All We Wanted Was Everything and Everywhere*, 2019, Mambo, Bologna, Italy





# The Blue Fossil Entropic Stories

2013

Photographs



1

*The Blue Fossil Entropic Stories* is the photographic trace of an artistic intervention the artist staged in 2013, traveling to Iceland to climb an iceberg in the Arctic Ocean and melt the frozen water beneath his feet with a gas torch for eight hours. Like an absurd, quixotic hero, Julian Charrière confronts the elements in a seemingly hopeless battle—human time against geological time. And yet, a battle of which global warming is only the starting point. What remains of this perilous endeavor are three photographs of arresting beauty, a kind of contemporary version of Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog* (1817-18), and a questioning of our relation to nature as inherited from the Romantics via ecological thought.



2



3



4

On page before:  
*The Blue Fossil Entropic Stories III*, 2013

On this page:  
1 *The Blue Fossil Entropic Stories I*, 2013  
2 Detail, *The Blue Fossil Entropic Stories*, 2013  
3 Detail, *The Blue Fossil Entropic Stories*, 2013  
4 Detail, *The Blue Fossil Entropic Stories*, 2013

# Kunst

with Julius von Bismarck

2013

Photographs



1



3



2



4



*Kunst* is a collaboration between Julian Charrière and Julius von Bismarck. The work is the photographic documentation of a series of ephemeral intervention on specific sites, consisting in the apparent simple gesture of writing a single word in capital letters upon pieces of land, forest, mountains, and so forth. The meaning of the chosen word always corresponds to the surface on which it is written ("Wald" on a forest, "Dune" on a sand dune, "Mountain" on a peak, etc.), superimposing the signifier on the signified. This ongoing project is indebted both to Conceptual Art's insistence on the linguistic nature of all art propositions (Joseph Kosuth), and to Land Art's involvement with ephemeral marking of specific sites.



- 1 *Lava*, 2013
- 2 *Snow*, 2013
- 3 *Dune*, 2013
- 4 *Wald*, 2013

On previous page: *Jungle*, 2013  
On this page: *Crater*, 2013

# On The Sidewalk

2013

Various core samples, stainless steel hose clamps



Julian Charrière's *On The Sidewalk* is based on the exploration of human consciousness and the time-space relations between objects. Core samples from a range of locations, depths, and time periods—including cores from geological investigations, architectures, modern streets, and old Berlin cobble-stone pavements—were collected for this work. These core samples are then cut longitudinally into four pieces, to be reassembled separately in each sculpture and fastened with stainless steel hose-clamps. With the reassembly of these cores—and thus of the stories and the consecutive presents that they contain—time and space are mixed and compressed to form new arrangements with new dialogues between both geological and architectural elements. Each sculpture functions as an avatar of a vertical geological timeline, stressing the idea of history as a human construction.

On this and next page: *On The Sidewalk*, 2013; Installation view, *Jeune Art Suisse*, 2013, Le Commun - Batiment d'art Contemporain, Geneva, Switzerland



# And The Post-Modern Collapse Of Time And Space

2013

Full HD color video, 16:9 aspect ratio, stereo sound, 02'10"

[Watch video online](#) - Password: DGKd5TWx



*And The Post-Modern Collapse Of Time And Space* is a short video loop, shot in Iceland and capturing a single, accidental action: a stone rolling down a mountain, set in motion by the artist's hand. Like the butterfly effect of chaos theory, there is no knowing what this initial, simple gesture will generate, only that the smallest of changes can result in large differences in a later state, in other spaces.



# Digesting Geometry

2013

Photographs



*Digesting Geometry* documents a series of interventions performed with pigeons in public spaces in Berlin. Sunflower seeds are placed on the ground in different geometric shapes. Attracted by the food, the surrounding pigeons peck at the seeds, creating geometrical figures which disappear and reappear every time they get disturbed. The figure of the pigeon, this once domesticated bird which served as messenger, has lost its usefulness and is seen as an out of control parasite occupying the urban landscape. With his performance, Charrière tames the birds back into structured, ordered patterns, lifting them out of their apparent chaos and reintroducing them into the geometry of our cities.

# Some Pigeons Are More Equal Than Others

with Julius von Bismarck

2012  
Photographs



On left page: *Some Pigeons Are More Equal Than Others*, 2012  
On right page: *Some Pigeons Are More Equal Than Others*, (Suite of 9), 2012,





*Some Pigeons Are More Equal Than Others* is a collaboration between Julian Charrière and Julius von Bismarck which has been performed and exhibited in Copenhagen, Venice, and Berlin. While engaging the city as a robust spatial ecology of things, perceptions, movements, and constant surprise, *Some Pigeons Are More Equal Than Others* consists of a specially designed pigeon-trapping apparatus which is installed in public forums. Whilst inside of the machine, pigeons are airbrushed with vibrant, nontoxic dyes before being released back into the urban environments we all share. While the paint is harmless to the health of the pigeons, it destabilizes the safety of our perceptions concerning the roles of art, institutions, and urban animals—including humans—when different species interact in public spaces, the space of their rights, and of our everyday lives. Painted pigeons reenter the public sphere as a new species of sorts, charging those which co-constitute the city to reorientate their perceptions and renegotiate the terms on which they cohabitate.

On previous page: *Some Pigeons Are More Equal Than Others*, 2012; Installation view, *Life Clock*, 2012, Den Frie Center for Contemporary Art, Copenhagen, Denmark

On this page: In Action, *Some Pigeons Are More Equal Than Others*, 2012, Copenhagen, Denmark and Venice, Italy







# Panorama

2011-2012

Photographs

Super 16mm film with sound, 08'20"

Julian Charrière's series *Panorama* consists of photographs seeming to depict majestic alpine landscapes under various weather conditions, showing snowy peaks emerging from foggy valleys or mountain panoramas lit by a fleeting rainbow. But images are not always what they appear to be and, indeed, what Julian Charrière shot in this series are different ephemeral interventions, produced site-specifically in various construction sites in Berlin. The artist used extracted soil covered by flour and fire extinguisher foam to generate miniature, model Alps inspired by his native Switzerland in the middle of the city. With this work, the artist questions not only how perception works, but also our fantasized relation to "nature" and the sublime, while playing the demiurge on his own, limited scale.



On the right: Video stills, *Panorama - Behind the scenes*, 2011  
On the left: *Panorama - 52.31.10.80N - 13.24.44.11E*, 2011;  
*Panorama - 52.30.01.48N - 13.22.19.95E*, 2011  
On previous page: *Panorama - 52.29.55.98N - 13.22.18.88E*, 2012



# I Dig Myself Into A Hole

2012  
Performance

Julian Charrière performed *I Dig Myself Into A Hole* in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in which he literally dug a pit around himself. When the hole became too deep for him to remove the dirt himself, he hired local people to help with the work, until he was completely trapped. This work, in which the body of the artists digs down into the earth as if digging back into the past, is a very direct confrontation with the layers of past times, set in a dialectical relation to the time it takes to perform the task. *I Dig Myself Into A Hole* can be read as a forerunner of Charrière's *On The Sidewalk*, *I Have Forgotten The Dinosauria* (2013), although the performative, Land Art-inspired aspect has disappeared, and actual material traces have replaced photographic documentation.



*I Dig Myself Into A Hole*, 2012, in action