

— PRESS RELEASE—

Eglė Budvytė en Marija Olšauskaitė  
'Song Sing Soil'

22.01.2023 - 02.04.2023

Wed - Fri 13:00 - 17:00

Sat - Sun 11:00 - 17:00

Performance 'Song Sing Soil'

February 18, 4 pm and 8 pm

February 19, 2 pm and 4 pm

March 18, 4 pm and 8 pm

March 19, 2 pm and 4 pm

April 1, 4 pm and 8 pm

April 2, 2 pm and 4 pm

Vleeshal

Center for Contemporary Art, Middelburg (NL)

[www.vleeshal.nl](http://www.vleeshal.nl)

i'm growing  
i'm growing veggies  
i'm spreading my legs  
i'm exiting the rat race  
i'm sucking my mess  
i compost my fear  
i lick up my smear  
i sharpen my instincts  
i slow down my heartbeats  
i feed up my rats  
i go down your spine  
i drink up your juices...

Vleeshal opens its 2023 program with 'Song Sing Soil' by Eglė Budvytė and Marija Olšauskaitė. The venue has been split into two spaces, with two separate entrances.

In the front room of the Vleeshal is 'Songs from the Compost: Mutating Bodies, Imploding Stars', a film by Budvytė with Olšauskaitė and Ona Julija Lukas Steponaitytė. It was exhibited as part of 'The Milk of Dreams' at the 59th Venice Biennale in 2022 and is shown here for the first time in The Netherlands.

Shot on location in the forests and sand dunes around Nida Art Colony on the Curonian Spit in Lithuania, the film features a cast of teenage dancers and students from a local highschool, in what has been described as a "meditation on sylvan-cyborgian symbiosis." While wearing

costumes that are partly decomposed after being buried in the ground for several weeks - and with their bodies extended and enhanced through a series of mysterious prosthetics - the performers enact fleshy becomings and unbecomings in ritualized relationships with the landscape.

The back space hosts a sound installation and functions as a rehearsal space for the development of a new performance work, which will evolve throughout the exhibition. A custom-modified trampoline plays a central role in this space. During the performances, the trampoline becomes a stage and an integral part of the choreography - not as a way for the performers to jump into the air, but as a way for them to move while sinking into the ground. When there is no performance, visitors are invited to lie down on the trampoline, to listen in a horizontal position.

The ground and its composting soils are important motifs for the artists in developing this new work. Gravity has a lot of pull in the choreography; bodies move slowly, through downward horizontality and surrender. The ground is where materials rot and break down while new growth simultaneously takes formation. How to move in the space that exists between form and formlessness? Also: How to move while being moved by each other? Just as the soil is a site of intense and messy relationality, the trampoline is embraced here as a shared plane where everyone is affected by each other's movements.

'Song Sing Soil' explores permeability between shapelessness and form, between the realms of living and dying, between meaning making and meaning falling apart. The performance slowly unfolds around a specially conceived song that drifts between different mindsets, tones, voices and frequencies. The soundtrack fluctuates between fierce instructions directed to the listener, silent moments, tender melodies and intimate musings. The performers' movements respond to this soundscape, supporting the words with their bodies and gazes.

The piece is a plea for slowing down, for staying with the inbetweenness, and for expanding the capacity for feeling and listening.

'Song Sing Soil' is curated by Roos Gortzak, director of Vleeshal.

Eglė Budvytė (b. 1981, Lithuania) is an artist based in Amsterdam and Vilnius. In her practice—which involves songs, poetry, videos and performances—she explores the permeable relationships between bodies, audiences, and environments, with a particular emphasis on the powers of vulnerability and collectivity.

Marija Olšauskaitė (b. 1989, Lithuania) is an artist based in Vilnius and New York City. She employs various modes of collaboration and explores the themes of relationships, openness, intimacy, and belonging.

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