

# Marjolijn Dijkman

## Earthing Discharge

September 4,

2020

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March 21,

2021

Marjolijn Dijkman (b. 1978 in Groningen, The Netherlands) employs scientific methods and imaging technologies to bring underlying socio-political structures and their environmental entanglements to light. Operating in the space between fact and fiction, and abstraction and speculation, she creates films, performances, objects, and photographs that challenge the ideological and cultural dominance of Western science. *Earthing Discharge* is an extension of the artist's research into the history of electricity and the environmental impact of contemporary energy storage. By documenting materials linked to what may become one of the largest lithium mines in the world in Manono in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dijkman comments on the ecological fallout generated from mining this valuable mineral and the toxic electronic waste produced as a result of the rise of green energy.

For this commissioned wallpaper, Dijkman creates a collage comprised of photographs depicting items associated with technology and energy use—minerals, circuit boards, personal devices, and industrial leftovers. Arranged across the CAC's 40-foot lobby wall, the images are rendered in high contrast, emphasizing the objects' electrical fields and radiant glow. Dijkman's labor-intensive process involves activating the conductive matter using high voltage electricity and photographing them through heat conductive glass similar to what is used in smartphones. The resulting blue and purple halos and irregular linear rays, a phenomenon known as *corona discharge*, is caused by the ionization and electrical disturbance of adjacent air. The photographic collage makes visible electric currents that we rarely see, calling attention to the systems of extraction that support most of the world's modern energy, communication, and mobile computing technologies.

Organized by Amara Antilla, Senior Curator, Contemporary Arts Center.

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