



Charles Stankievech
The Desert Turned to Glass
07/09 – 21/10 2023

The Desert Turned to Glass is a meditation oscillating between the cosmic and the chthonic. Traveling through vast distances in space and time from outer space to Paleolithic caves, Stankievecch entwines science fiction speculation and contemporary theories on the origin of life, consciousness, and art. A meteorite floats above a sand floor, a psychedelic video crystallizes deep time. Fog, clouds, and smoke venting from volcanic lava flows across the screen. At a moment obsessed with planetary endings, the video returns to the formation of the earth's atmosphere in geologic time—in a word, to creation itself.

At the centre of the exhibition, the series *Eye of Silence* — composed of a video and photographs — marshals high atmospheric footage of the Albertan Badlands, the Utah Salt Flats, Icelandic and Japanese volcanoes, and a meteorite crater in the Namibian desert. Visualizing the earth at the critical moments of its evolution, the narrative begins by speculating about the moment when life on the planet was seeded from a frozen meteorite. Accompanying the psychedelic visuals of the video, temporality and timelessness entwine in a sonic fugue, combining both subterranean beats and cosmic noise — inviting the visitor to meditate on deep time through deep listening. In dialogue with contemporary scientific research, the work also comprises original field recordings of solar rays, hydrophone recordings of crackling Arctic ice and flowing Yucatán cenotes and ambisonic recordings captured within the Canary Islands' volcanic calderas. Continuing Stankievecch's pursuit of sounds beyond the human threshold, an ultrasonic sound installation, *What Is It Like to Be a Bat?*, hangs from the ceiling. Using laboratory equipment to run the installation, the work proposes the possibility/failure of a previously impossible mediation between species. In an attempt at transspecies communication, an Artificial Intelligence reads the classic philosophical essay by Thomas Nagel in a frequency only audible to bats. Visitors in the gallery can strain their attention hoping to hear something,

possibly hallucinating like our ancestors in prehistoric caves who imagined a newly born consciousness that dissolves the boundaries between animal and human.

Finally a scientific model of a historically significant meteorite floats above a sand floor. The levitating artifact suspends the moment in time just before a cataclysmic collision that would fuse sand into glass upon impact.

The Desert Turned to Glass calls forth otherworldly experiences from within the depths and heights of this world, at the same time cultivating an aesthetic disposition to receive them.

Born 1978, Okotoks, Canada.

Charles Stankievecch is an artist redefining “fieldwork” at the convergence of geopolitics, deep ecologies, and sonic resonances. From the Arctic's northernmost settlement to the depths of the Pacific Ocean, Stankievecch's practice uncovers the paradoxes of our existence on the planet by engaging with the imperceptible. His diverse body of work has been shown internationally at institutions including the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna; MASS MoCA; Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal; Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal; and the Venice and SITE Santa Fe Biennales, among others. He's lectured at dOCUMENTA (13) and the 8th Berlin Biennale and his writing has been published by Sternberg, e-flux, Verso, MIT and Princeton Architectural Press. Stankievecch has participated in such residencies as The Banff Centre, Fogo Island, Marfa Fieldwork, Atlantic Centre for the Arts, Museumsquartier Vienna, and the Canadian Department of Defence. His comprehensively researched curatorial projects include *Magnetic Norths* and *CounterIntelligence*—both critically acclaimed as the top Canadian exhibitions of 2010 and 2014 respectively. In 2015 he won the OAAG award for best solo exhibition *Monument as Ruin* and was shortlisted twice for the Sobey in 2011 (Westcoast) and 2016 (Ontario). Since 2015, he is an editor of the peer-review *Afterall Journal* (U. of Chicago Press). In 2007 he was a founding faculty member of the Yukon School of Visual Arts in Dawson City, Canada (under joint governance by the Indigenous sovereign nation of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in). From 2015-2021 he was Director of Visual Studies, where he is currently an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design at the University of Toronto. For 2022-23, he is also a research professor in the Department of Architecture at the University of Tokyo.

Solo Exhibitions selection

2023

The Desert Turned to Glass, Contemporary Calgary, Calgary, Canada

2022

BREATHLESS. The Power Plant, Toronto, Canada. (Collaboration with Ala Roushan, Architectural Designer)

2021

La llave de cristal (viajes-espejo). Tae Foundation. Hacienda Ochil, Yucatán, Mexico.

2019

The Drowned World (project for the Toronto Biennial)

2017

Commission/Public Art at *Biosphere* (Buckminster Fuller *Expo67 Dome*), produced as part an exhibition at the MACM: *In Search of Expo 67*.

2016

Timbral. Musée Joliette. Quebec.

Group Exhibitions selection

2023

The Glass Key (Domus). Contemporary Calgary, Canada

Eye of Silence. ITA (Institute of Technology in Architecture), ETH (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zürich).

Eye of Silence. Center for Contemporary Art. Nanyang Technological University

2022

The Last Museum. Nýlistasafnið (The Living Art Museum), Reykjavik, Iceland.

The Glass Key (Timanfaya). Rewilding the Museum (ARKEN/Royal Danish Academy), Lanzarote, Canary Islands, Spain.

2021

Open Secret. KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany. Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany.



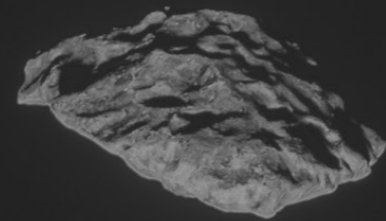
Eye of Silence

2023

6K video, 7.1 audio, 30 mins

produced by the Vega Foundation

producer: Ala Roushan



At the centre of the exhibition, the film *Eye of Silence* - marshals high atmospheric footage of the Albertan Badlands, the Utah Salt Flats, Icelandic and Japanese volcanoes, and a meteorite cratered in the Namibian desert. Visualising the earth at the critical moments of its evolution, the narrative begins by speculating about the moment when life on the planet was seeded from a frozen meteorite. Accompanying the psychedelic visuals of the video, temporality and timelessness entwine in a sonic fugue, combining both subterranean beats and cosmic noise - inviting the visitor to meditate on deep time through deep listening. In dialogue with contemporary scientific research, the work also comprises original field recordings of solar rays, hydrophone recordings of crackling Arctic ice and flowing Yucatán cenotes and ambisonic recordings captured within the Canary Islands' volcanic calderas.



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What Is it Like To Be a Bat?
2023
Sound Installation, AI Voice speaking ultrasonic frequencies 20-200 KHz



Continuing Stankieveh's pursuit of sounds beyond the human threshold, an ultrasonic sound installation, *What Is It Like To Be a Bat?*, hangs from the ceiling. Using laboratory equipment to run the installation, the work proposes the possibility/failure of a previously impossible mediation between species. In an attempt at transspecies communication, an Artificial Intelligence reads the classic philosophic essay by Thomas Nagel in a frequency only audible to bats. Visitors can strain their attention hoping to hear something, possibly hallucinating like our ancestors in prehistoric caves who imagined a newly born consciousness that dissolved boundaries between animal and human.



The Desert Turned to Glass

2012/2023

Floating meteorite sculpture, volcanic sand



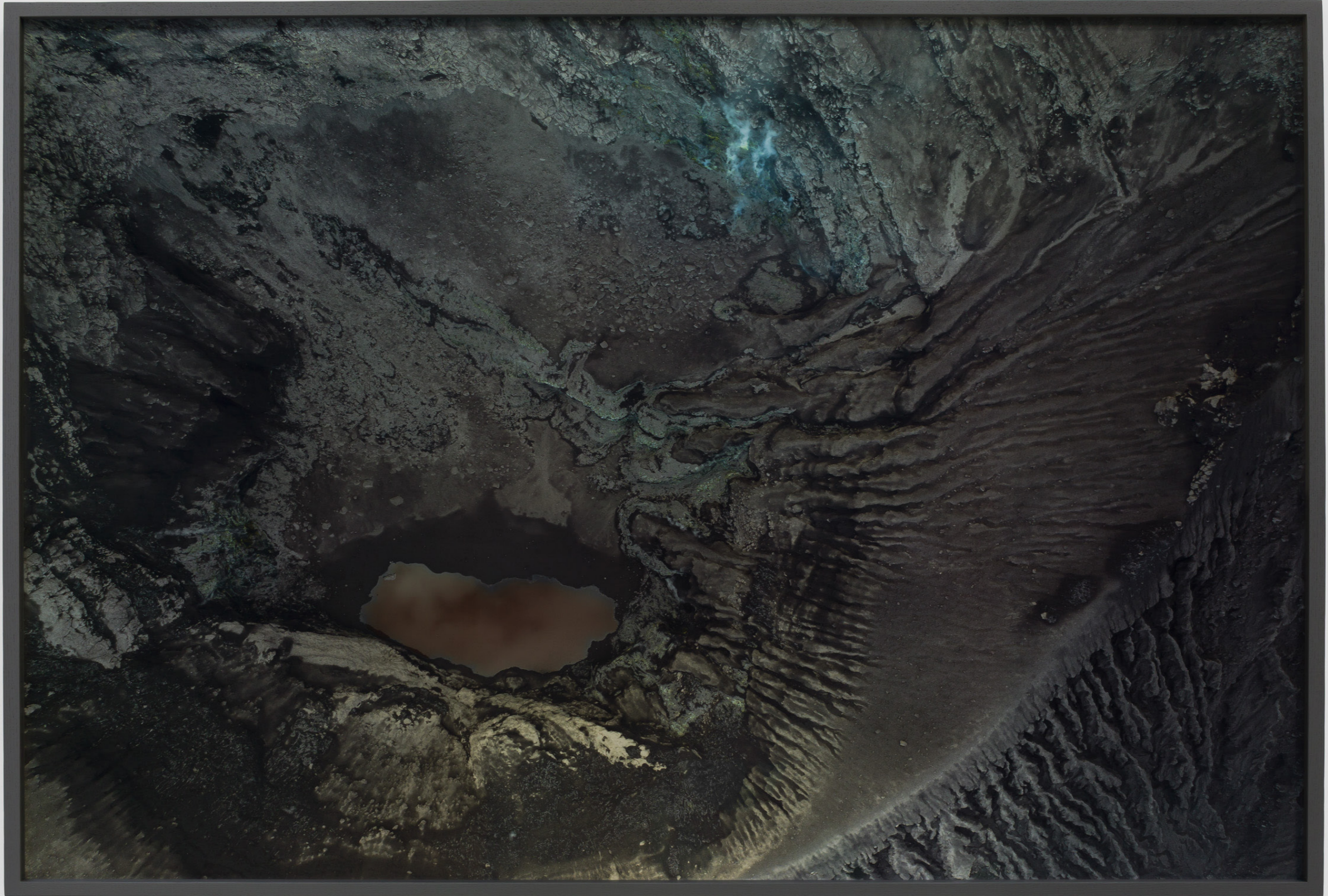
A scientific model of a historically significant meteorite floats above a sand floor. The levitating artifact suspends the moment in time just before a cataclysmic collision that would fuse sand into glass upon impact. *The Desert Turned to Glass* calls forth otherworldly experiences from within the depths and heights of this world, at the same time cultivating an aesthetic disposition to receive them.



Eye of Silence (Sakurajima)
2022
Archival pigment print
133 x 75 cm



Eye of Silence (Specular # 01)
2023
Archival Pigment Print
300 x 75 cm



Eye of Silence (Crimson Crater)
2022
Archival Pigment Print
133 x 100 cm



Installation view: *The Desert Turned to Glass*
07/09 - 21/10

Upcoming Programming

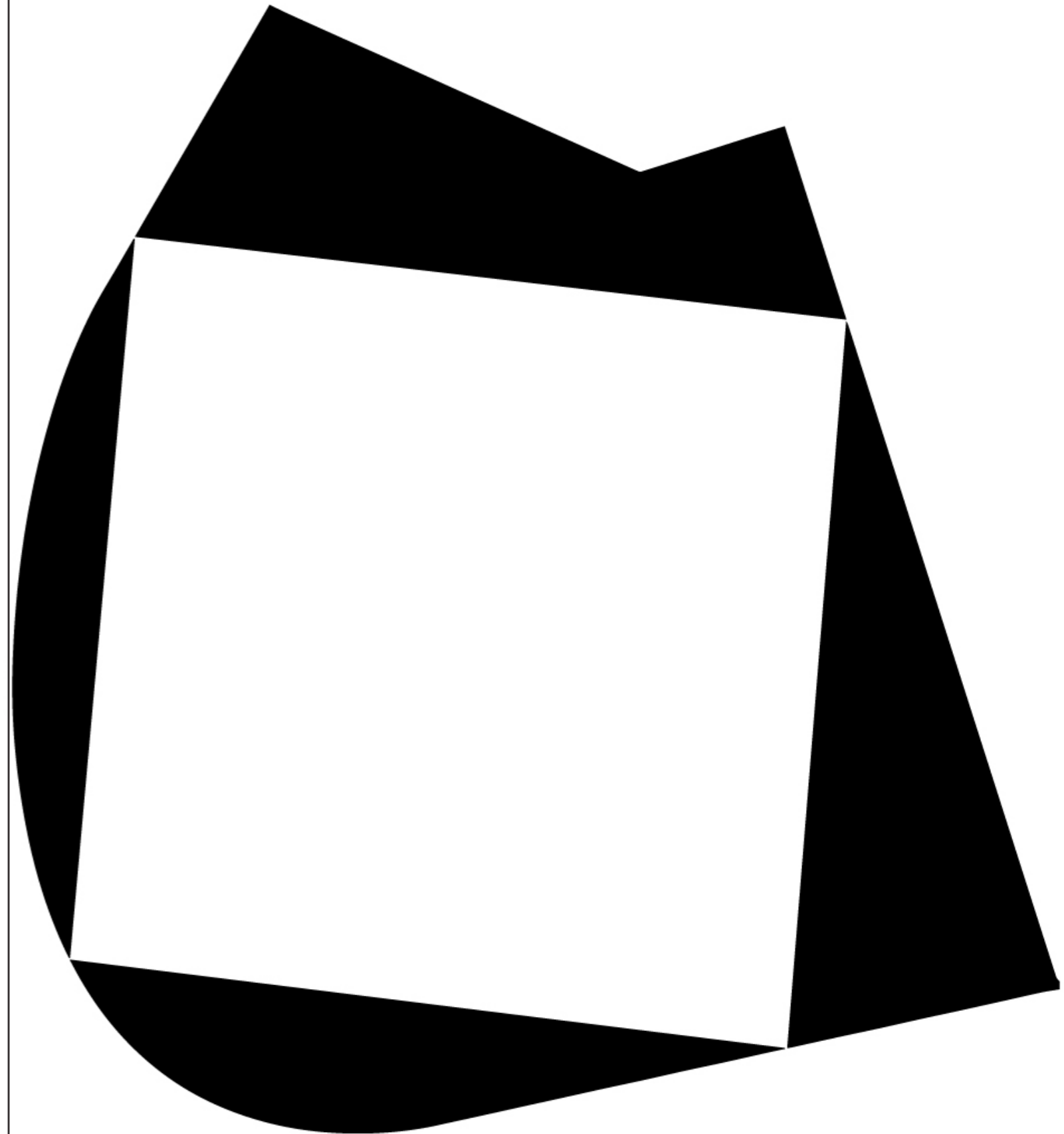
20/09 Book Launch John C. Welchman: *Royal Book Lodge*

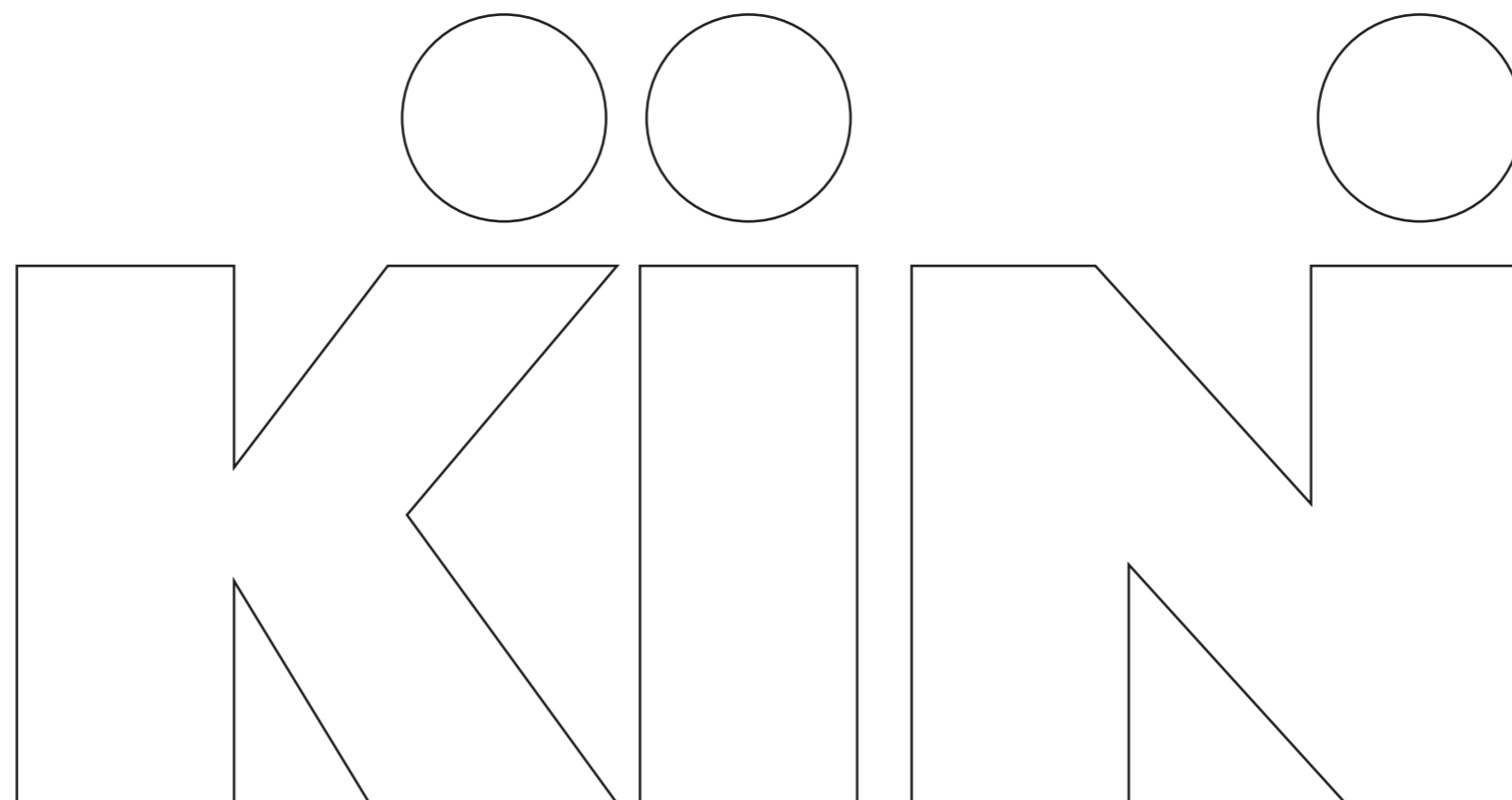
23/10 1 Day Project - Yalda Afsah

27/10 Exhibition - Zuza Golińska

15/12 Exhibition - Thibaut Henz

01/04 Exhibition - Survival in the 21st Century at the Deichtorhallen, Hamburg





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KIN Gallery BV : 795.970.617

Works of art described are subject to changes in availability and price without prior notice.