

Press Kit

Over Land and Sea

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Over Land and Sea **5 April – 8 June 2025**

Participating artists: Allora & Calzadilla, Louis d'Heudières & Nina Kuttler, Eliška Konečná, Teresa Solar Abboud

Press preview: Friday, 4 April 2025, 11 am

Exhibition opening: Friday, 4 April 2025, 7 pm



Teresa Solar Abboud, *Osteoclast (I do not know how I came to be on board this ship, this navel of my ark)*, 2021, Courtesy the artist and Travesía Cuatro, Photo: Pablo Gómez Ogando

The group show *Over Land and Sea* tells of the migrant history of humanity, its present and future. On display will be sculptures, wall reliefs as well as video and sound installations by Teresa Solar Abboud, Eliška Konečná, Allora & Calzadilla, Louis d'Heudières and Nina Kuttler. In a tension between the tangible and the mythical, the animate and the industrial world, the works point to the vulnerability of human beings and, simultaneously, their inherent ability to change and transform. They encourage a humanistic reflection on the way we live today.

The starting point of the exhibition is **Teresa Solar Abboud's** installation *Osteoclast (I do not know how I came to be on board this ship, this navel of my ark)*, which will have its first appearance in Germany. In large-format sculptures, the artist draws a parallel between bones – hollow structures, carriers of tissue, veins and cell communities – and ships – vehicles of migration, conveyers of people and knowledge. Unlike the enormous ships built and docked in Hamburg's harbour, Solar Abboud's canoes bring the human body down to sea level, reminding us of our fragility when faced with the power of water. Inspired by bone flutes – the world's oldest wind instrument – the artist evokes an analogy between people's breath and the movement that the wind lends to boats on the ocean.

In her textile bas-reliefs, **Eliška Konečná** allegorically alludes to topics that also resonate with Solar Abboud's installation and its references to escape routes across the sea. The artist is concerned with

universal questions of existence, morality and desire. The figures in her triptych *Thirst* appear somewhat like timeless, ancient gods who are, nonetheless, bound to make human mistakes. While their hybrid bodies serve as an expression of their desire, they are, inevitably, likewise subjected to punishment. The depicted scenes, in which the figures are washing their bodies – apparently in search for forgiveness – juxtapose pain and guilt, resignation and acceptance. As the motif suggests here, water does not disappear, it rather evaporates and transforms.

The video work *Raptor's Rapture*, by **Allora & Callzadilla** sets out from the early days of humanity and explores the formation of social bonds through music, the growth of populations and its territorial expansion. In the video, a flutist specializing in prehistoric instruments plays on a wing bone, one of the oldest musical instruments ever discovered, in the presence of a live griffon vulture. The acoustic trace generated by the flute emerges as a time capsule reaching us from the origins of music and language.

Completing the circle, **Nina Kuttler and Louis d'Heudières** have developed a speculative vision of the future. Their new installation consisting of sound works and sculptures was created specifically for the project and centres on the extraction of a particular mineral under questionable conditions with the aim of feeding it into the capitalist cycle. The mining of rare earths is a major intervention affecting the landscape and often rendering entire areas uninhabitable. Both climatic changes and the direct exploitation of natural resources are factors triggering migration. At the same time, the ongoing trade in goods and raw materials is part of the transaction network in which we, as members of capitalist society, inevitably find ourselves involved without moving our physical bodies.

Two cooperations will complement the exhibition: together with the **Metropolis Cinema**, two films on the topic of displacement will be screened there on 23 and 26 May: *Atlantique*, the award-winning debut by French-Senegalese filmmaker and actress Mati Diop, tells the story of a young woman whose life changes drastically after her lover disappears on the boat crossing to Europe. The Golden Bear-winning documentary *Fire at Sea* by director Gianfranco Rosi portrays the island of Lampedusa, where two worlds collide – the refugees' struggle for survival and the everyday lives of the island's locals.

The offer of accompanying events also includes a partnership with **Hafengruppe Hamburg**. Their Alternative Harbour Tours take a critical look at Europe's third-largest port. Between the canals of Speicherstadt, container terminals and cruise ships, participants can learn more about topics such as migration and racism, the inequalities of world trade and women's work in the port on three Thursdays a month. Visitors to the Kunsthaus can take part in the tours with their exhibition ticket at a discounted price of €20 or €26 (depending on duration). Conversely, participants in an Alternative Harbour Tour receive reduced admission of €4 to the exhibition.

Curated by Anna Nowak

Kindly supported by



Allora & Calzadilla
***Raptor's Rapture*, 2012**

Single-channel high-definition video, 23:33 min
Courtesy the artists and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris

In their video works, Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla question traditional assumptions about what classifies life as human or animal by examining where and how human and non-human actors come into contact. *Raptor's Rapture* draws on the oldest musical instrument to open up new perspectives on the origins of culture.

The work was inspired by the discovery of a flute carved by a Homo sapiens around 35,000 years ago from the wing bone of a griffon vulture. The find was discovered in 2009 by archaeologists from the University of Tübingen in the Hohler Fels cave in Southern Germany. The instrument bears witness to the early importance of music, which evidently played a central role not only in the formation of social structures but also in the growth of populations and their territorial expansion. Music, therefore, was a crucial element in the evolutionary development of the human species.

In the video, flautist Bernadette Käfer, specializing in prehistoric instruments, explores the sounds of the bone flute in the presence of a live griffon vulture. The performance has a surreal dimension: the bird – as a descendant of the species from whose bones the instrument was once made – is confronted with the acoustic relics of early human culture. The strange yet somehow familiar sound of the flute appears to be a time capsule reaching us from the origins of music and language.

With this juxtaposition, the artist duo Allora & Calzadilla draw a bridge between past and present and renegotiate the relation between human and non-human existence. *Raptor's Rapture* alludes to our relationship with the endangered griffon vulture: humans have always taken from nature what they felt they needed to survive – or what served their cultural enhancement. In the face of climate change, a yearning for a return to an existence in harmony with nature is emerging. The video work thus also addresses the current discourse on the elevation of humans over nature and, from an anthropocentric perspective, emphasizes the need to preserve biodiversity.

Louis d'Heudières & Nina Kuttler

That Metal Voice Quavers (Already on Peaks, the Green Gleams), 2025

4-channel sound, 35 min; 2-channel sound, 20 min; glazed ceramic, dimensions variable

In their works, Louis d'Heudières and Nina Kuttler explore themes relating to the Anthropocene, the interconnection between nature and culture and deep time – a concept encompassing geological and cosmic processes extending far beyond the human timeframe. For the exhibition, the artists have developed a speculative vision of the future.

Their multi-part installation addresses the exploitation of natural resources and its effects on landscapes and societies. At the centre of the narrative is the fictional mineral fimbulite, derived from one of the end-time catastrophes of Norse mythology – an ice age with three harsh winters. It is mined under questionable conditions in order to be fed into the capitalist cycle. The extraction of the mineral not only changes the landscape, perception and memories but also leaves behind an environment in which familiar rhythms and structures no longer apply.

The installation combines two multi-channel sound compositions with ceramic sculptures. The metallic surfaces of the objects made of black and red clay are reminiscent of mineral structures embedded in rock. Arranged in stacked formations, they provide a kind of orientation point within a fragmented, morphed landscape. The sonic dimension of the work picks up on the concept of acoustic ecology: using sound as a means of making places, landscapes and their transformations perceptible to the senses. The soundscape creates an atmosphere that oscillates between the familiar and the uncanny. It is complemented by fictional interviews in which varying perspectives make the imaginary world in which fimbulite is being mined tangible. At the same time, the current ecological crisis becomes unmistakably recognizable as a reality that is deeply inscribed in our social and economic structures.

Rare earths – which are contained in virtually all technical devices – form the basis of the digital age. At the same time, their extraction results in significant environmental impacts, often rendering entire areas uninhabitable. Climatic changes and the direct exploitation of natural resources both act as triggers for migration. At the same time, the ongoing trade in goods and raw materials is part of the transaction network in which we, as members of capitalist society, inevitably find ourselves involved without moving our physical bodies. The installation draws attention to this new form of ecological destruction and the underlying global power structures and makes the associated invisible processes audible. It raises the question of how speculative visions of the future can possibly influence our thoughts and actions in the present.

Eliška Konečná
Thirst, 2023

Three bas-reliefs: embroidery, upholstery, dyed velvet; 200 x 300 x 7 cm each
Courtesy Polansky Gallery, Prague / private collection, Prague

Eliška Konečná is concerned with universal questions of existence, morality and desire. Her textile bas-reliefs are imbued with a meditative, dreamlike atmosphere. The velvety textures of the soft material conjure a sense of intimacy and security; the depicted figures embody archetypal images of femininity. The triptych *Thirst* centres on basic human bodily needs – eating, sleeping, washing – and explores their deeper meaning, beyond the mere satisfaction of physiological necessities. Besides conveying notions of connectedness with nature and its vitality, the three bas-reliefs display a critical reflection on what is considered fragile and what is deemed as strong, on human dominance and the delicate nuances of care. While their curvy bodies exist as an evident expression of their desire, they are in equal measure subjected to punishment.

In *The Great Sleep*, a figure offers milk to a seemingly dying bird: a gesture balancing on the fine line between help and unintentional harm. Some sleeping figures appear enraptured and indifferent, while others observe the scene in a mode of curious detachment. In *The Great Bath*, the bodies – washing themselves in an alleged search for forgiveness – juxtapose pain and guilt, resignation and acceptance. *The Great Feast*, featuring the image of a banquet, tops off such ambiguities: it tells of affection and rejection in a cyclical procedure harbouring sensuality and control alike.

Water plays a pivotal role in Eliška Konečná's use of symbols. As a physical mass, it acts as a barrier which at the same time remains permeable. A single drop becomes a carrier of narrative meaning: all depending on the context, it may be a tear, blood, milk or semen. The works thus move between mythology and earthly experience, between the real world and inner, almost archetypal feelings. *Thirst* is a poetic, multi-layered reflection on human existence, longings and ambivalences. It shows that even the most basic actions are not simply about subsistence but often are also an expression of complex power relations, emotional struggles and deeply rooted social structures.

Teresa Solar Abboud

Osteoclast (I do not know how I came to be on board this ship, this navel of my ark), 2021

Resin, metal, automotive paint; between 100 x 550 x 100 cm and 150 x 650 x 150 cm

Courtesy the artist and Travesía Cuatro, Madrid

Teresa Solar Abboud's sculptures visualize the abstractness of time: they evoke associations of prehistoric life forms and, at the same time, they are fiction and simulation. As organic compositions, they are inspired by natural history, ecology and anatomy.

The expansive installation *Osteoclast (I do not know how I came to be on board this ship, this navel of my ark)* presented here consists of five kayaks modelled after the shapes of human bones. The sculptures are reminiscent of a dismembered skeleton; they relate the structure supporting the human body – thus enabling it to move – to one of the most traditional means of transportation. Teresa Solar Abboud sees the human body as a porous, constantly changing system. The works on display are named after the osteoclast – a cell responsible for the breakdown and renewal of bone tissue. Thus, they allude to key processes of the body: growth, transformation and decay.

Inspired by a bone flute, the oldest musical instrument known, parallels arise between the human breath – capable of producing sound – and the wind that moves boats across the ocean. In contrast to the enormous cargo ships built and docked in shipyards, Teresa Solar Abboud's kayaks place the human body at sea level, thus emphasizing its vulnerability in the face of the forces of nature. The bright orange colour of the boats hint at life jackets, which are essential for survival in emergencies at sea. *Osteoclast* was originally created for the Liverpool Biennial in 2021, making reference to the history of slave trade connected to the city's port. Thus, the sculptures establish a link between the fates of enslaved persons in the 17th century and the danger to life which refugees undergo today in order to cross oceans.

Teresa Solar Abboud's work spans an arc from prehistory to the present, showing that migration – both individual and collective – represents a constant in human history. The dissolution of linear concepts of time, the question of how discourses shape our perception and the reference to pressing social challenges are at the core of this artistic exploration, opening up space for reflection on migration, processes of transformation and the inextricable interconnection of people, nature, history, the present and the future.

Accompanying programme

Fri, 4 April 2025, 7 pm

Exhibition opening

Introduction: Anna Nowak

DJ set: Laetizia

Wed, 16 April 2025, 7 pm

Nina Kalenbach in conversation with Eske Schlüters & Tillmann Terbuyken about the project *Untitled History*

Sat, 26 April 2025, 6 pm– 1 am

Long Night of Museums

Thu, 1 May 2025, 6–10 pm

***Panorama XII* with Louis d'Heudières, Nina Kuttler & Defetro**

Opening *Whisper Down the Lane*

Sat, 10 May 2025, 1–6 pm

Symposium: *On the Importance of Art for a Resilient Democracy*

Thu, 22 May 2025, 3–6 pm

WE ARE OCEAN: Blaupause Hamburg

Project presentation and talk with Till Kause & pupils of Ida Ehre Schule

Fri, 23 May 2025, 7 pm

***Atlantique* (Mati Diop, 2019)**

Film screening at Metropolis Kino

Mon, 26 May 2025, 7 pm

***Fire at Sea* (Gianfranco Rosi, 2016)**

Film screening at Metropolis Kino

Thu, 5 June 2025, 6–10 pm

***Panorama XIII* with Hannes Wienert & Naama**

Fri, 6 June 2025, 7 pm

dépARTS im Gepäck: Artist talk with Katja Pilipenko & Maik Gräf

Results of the Paris Residency of Claussen-Simon-Stiftung

Moderation: Anna Nowak

Thu, 10 / 17 / 24 April 2025, 8 / 15 / 22 May 2025 & 5 June 2025, 5:30 pm

Alternative Harbour Tours

In cooperation with Hafengruppe Hamburg

Guided tours

Wed, 16.4.2025, 6 pm, with Jaana Heine

Wed, 7.5.2025, 6 pm, with Anna Nowak

Thu, 5.6.2025, 5:30 pm, with Hannah Köchy

General information

Opening hours

Tuesday–Sunday 11 am–6 pm

Closed on Mondays

Admission fees

Regular: 6 €

Reduced: 4 €

Groups: 2 €

Admission to the events at the Kunsthaus Hamburg and participation in guided tours are free of charge.
Admission for refugees is free.

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