

GRAVEL AND SAND.
AGGREGATES AND OTHER RECENT GROUNDS

14 MAY 2026 -
31 JUL 2026

Working from a long-standing interest in the origins of construction materials and the links between cities and the sites they are extracted from, Lara Almarcegui's recent projects turn to recently produced matter: gravel, sand and rubble, and the terrains they give shape to. These large-scale, speculative works are frequently developed in dialogue with geologists and mining institutions.

The point of departure for this exhibition is a questioning of newly formed landscapes: small build-ups left over after demolitions or quarrying as well as vast terrains of displaced materials such as spoil heaps or dredged sand. River diversions are another source of new geographies, like temporary islands or sandbanks. For Almarcegui, these indeterminate sites become a lens through which to consider their transient present and possible futures.

Die Halden in Deutschland (The Spoil Heaps of Germany) compiles a vast volumetric calculation of the country's largest spoil heaps with the purpose of estimating the volume of land they form. Mapping their total mass across a 17-metre wall at the Kunstmuseum Moritzburg Halle (Saale), the work quantifies the amount of waste rock displaced through potash and lignite extraction during 175 years of mining debris in Germany, while pointing to the latent potential of these residues. The biggest spoil heaps in terms of volume are associated with potash and lignite mining still in operation. At 2.2 billion cubic metres of lignite waste, Sophienhöhe stands as the country's largest spoil heap.

The drawings for unrealised projects developed for exhibitions and biennials propose a series of installations involving construction sand sourced from rivers, lakes and seas. The global dredging industry is responsible for shifting vast quantities of sand and generating new landforms through extraction. Although these projects remain unrealised, largely due to logistical constraints of scale and weight, the drawings persist as speculative traces of the complex entanglement of material, site and built environment.

Where are the materials needed to build Bilbao sourced from? What is the connection between the aggregates used in concrete and the places they come from? Developed at the quarry in Mañaria, ***Calcárea*** is an invitation to observe a very ancient geological material just prior to its extraction. Formed over 115 million years ago, this rock had remained hidden inside the mountain until, as part of this project, it could be seen for a few days only before being processed for use in the construction of Bilbao.

In ***Buried House***, produced by the Nasher Sculpture Center, a house in southeast Dallas scheduled for demolition is dismantled and then materially reabsorbed into its site. The rubble is buried in the garden, returning the materials to their original geological placement. Set within a neighbourhood in constant flux, the recycling of the house affords an opportunity to reflect on the past, present and future of the site.

Acknowledgements

The Mutxate quarry in Mañaria, owned by Heidelberg Materials.

Die Halden in Deutschland / Waste Heaps in Germany, 2025.

Wall text, variable dimensions.

Non realised proposals. Sand dredging.

North Sea, Aarhus (commissioned by the AROS Triennial, 2020).

Tagus River, Port of Lisbon (commissioned by the Lisbon Architecture Triennial, 2022).

River IJssel, Zwolle (commissioned by the IJsselbiennial, 2023).

River Spree, Berlin (commissioned by Spreepark, 2025).

River IJssel, Zwolle (commissioned by the IJsselbiennial, 2023).

Drawings on printed photograph, 20 x 30 cm.

Mañaría Limestone, 2026.

170 x 90 x 25.5 cm (left).

206,5 x 116 x 21 cm (right).

Mañaría limestone, 2026.

4 drawings, 48,3 x 32,38 cm.

Drawing in pencil and Indian ink on photograph.

Mañaría limestone, 2026.

2 drawings, 48,3 x 32,38 cm.

Drawing in pencil and Indian ink on photograph.

Limestone installation.

Buried house, Dallas 2014.

Video, 7 min

(Produced by Nasher Sculpture Center).

In 2013, Almarcegui exhibited at the Spanish Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale. She has participated in biennials such as those in Rabat, Cuenca, Lyon, Manifesta IX, Shenzhen, Athens, Taipei, Gwangju, Sharjah, Lofoten, Moss, Sao Paulo, Seville and Liverpool.

Her solo exhibitions include Halted Quarry, GfZK, Leipzig, Gravas y Arenas, Museum Patio Herreriano, Valladolid (2024); Stopped Quarry, Ellen de Bruijne Projects Gallery, Amsterdam; Graves, La Panera Art Centre, Lleida; Descampado ex-Rio Tinto, FRAC PACA, Marseille (2021); Lara Almarcegui Deep Inside Out, Graphische Sammlung ETH, Zurich; Beton, CAIRN, Digne; Volcán de Agrab: Derechos Minerales, IVAM, Valencia (2019). Gravel, Ellen de Bruijne Projects, Amsterdam (2018); Sand, Kunstverein Springhornhof, (2017); Le gypse, Casino Luxembourg (2016); Kunsthau Baselland; Museum Den Haag (2015); Mineral Rights, Ellen de Bruijne Projects Gallery, Amsterdam (2015); Gisement, Mor Charpentier Gallery, Paris; Por debajo, Parra y Romero Gallery, Madrid (2014); CREDAC, Ivry sur Seine, MUSAC, León and the Spanish Pavilion at the 55th

Group shows include 'Learning from the earth', Art Saffiental Biennale, Tenna. XIV Bienal de La Habana. 'Cycles'. Garagem Sul. Architecture Triennale, Lisboa. (2022) 5 Site Encounters, M+ Hongkong, Rabat Biennale (2019), Cuenca Biennale (2018), Lyon Biennale (2017), Wohnungsanfrage, HKW, Berlin (2015), Manifesta IX, Genk; TRACK, Gent (2012), Radical Nature, Barbican Art Centre London, Shenzhen Biennale, Athens Biennale (2009), Taipei Biennale, Gwangju Biennale (2008), Sharjah Biennale (2007), The 27 th São Paulo Biennial, (2006), Seville Biennial (2006) and the Liverpool Biennale (2004).