

Daniel Steegmann Mangrané

proposal for Ta Pantha Rei

A Leaf-Shaped Insect Draws Our Hands

Along the last couple of years I have been invited to realize my first two public artworks, one for the Liverpool Biennial which has become a permanent public sculpture for the city, and another permanent intervention for the new building of natural sciences at the Gothenburg University and its surrounding campus.

Along the process I have been thinking a lot what this “public” means, who informs it, how it had and will change, to whom the commissions address and how will the “permanent” sculptures themselves change in the coming future...

It's needless to say that all the process of thinking these proposals have been done in quarantine, in a moment when the value of the public (be it the public health system or the bare shared public space) has been completely reevaluated, where our vulnerability to the impacts of the extractivist logic of our societies has become adamant, our shared body an indelible mark of our times, our weal and woe common to all.

Nature, far from being a stable entity, is modified by each science and cultural breakthrough. This impermanency ultimately challenges our understanding of ourselves: From considering us at the center of the world, detached from that res-extensa that served as source of resources and backdrop of our evolving lives, to the present paradigm, where we have been thrown in a whirl of anthropogenic ecological crisis, our position in the cosmos has radically shifted decade after decade.

There's many other ways of understanding our relation with nature and our position in the world: Amerindian indigenous cosmologies for example consider that humanity - and not nature - is the shared condition of everything: for them a tree is a human being with another shape, so it is a panther or a river or the rain... and since everything is human, everything can be a subject and has its own agency. Such conception transforms the world in a cosmopolitical arena, where “we” gains a radically different meaning.

I been deeply interested in those questions all through my artistic career and even before: Trained as a biologist, in my vision the artwork cannot be anymore an isolated element, a mere artifact detached from its environment, fixed and ignoring any change, but needs to be able to create a space were our relation to the world is redefined, changing our vision of reality and of our place on it. I believe that the arts, experimentally invoquing any possible futures, have a fundamental role to face the incertitudes of the contemporary world and its challenges.

By thinking the Parc de la Chiers as a bioma inserted in a larger ecosystem I would like to propose an intervention where the diverse elements, build and natural, human and animal, loose its boundaries and become all part of a great “We”.

It's my understanding that a public artwork has to generate a movement where the patterns of interdependence become evident. The idea is thus creating a truly social sculpture, considering here who is part of this society - who belongs to the We - beyond its human constituents.

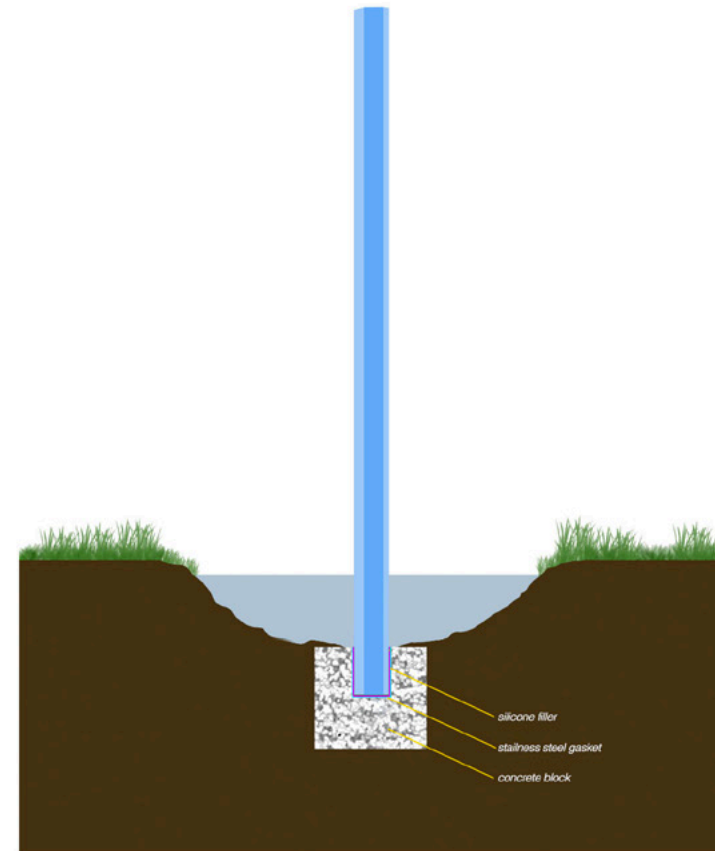
Digging in the pasts and futures of Differdange and the massive presence of the steel factory, I developed a project that tries to respond to the unfolding transformation of the region contributing to its symbolic patrimony, a diamond shape pristine prism emerging from the waters of the Chiers river, metaphorically and literally splitting the waters, as holder and trigger for our imagination, helping us launch ideas and intuitions, create unforeseen bonds with the place and start conversations.

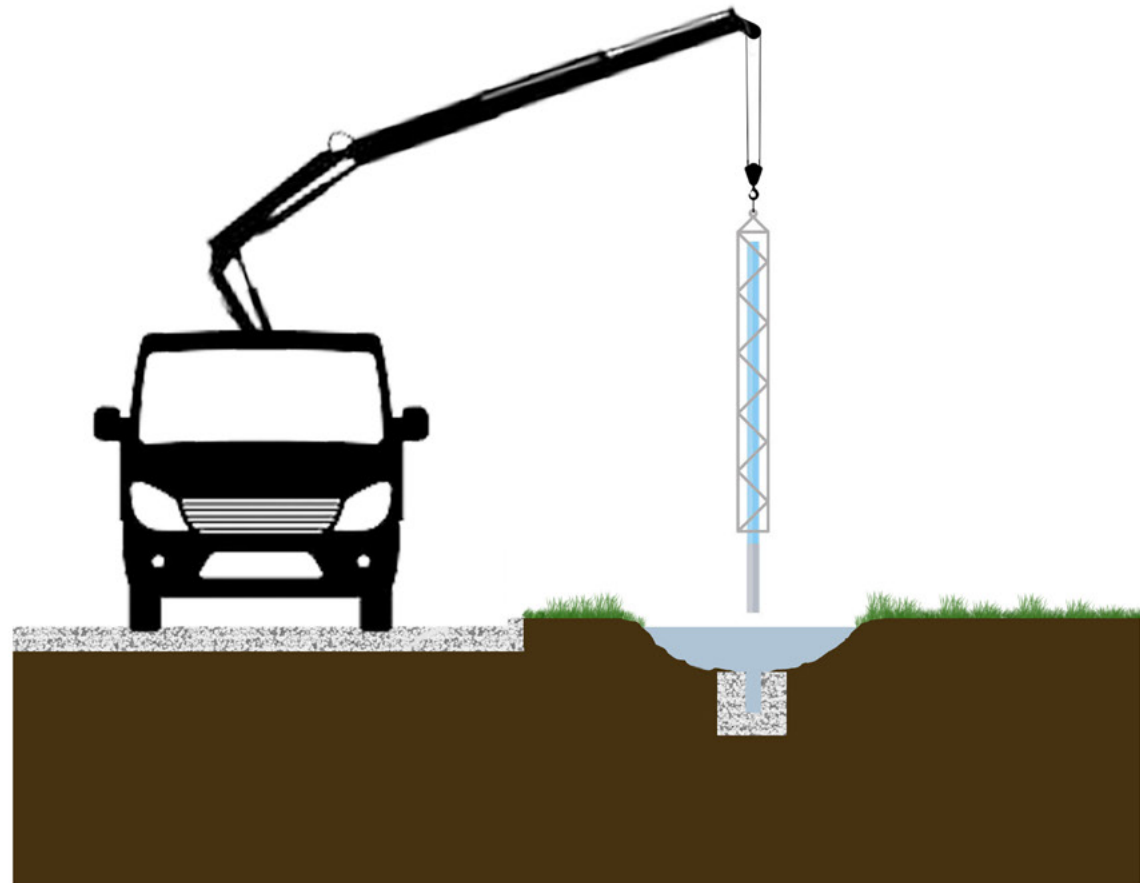
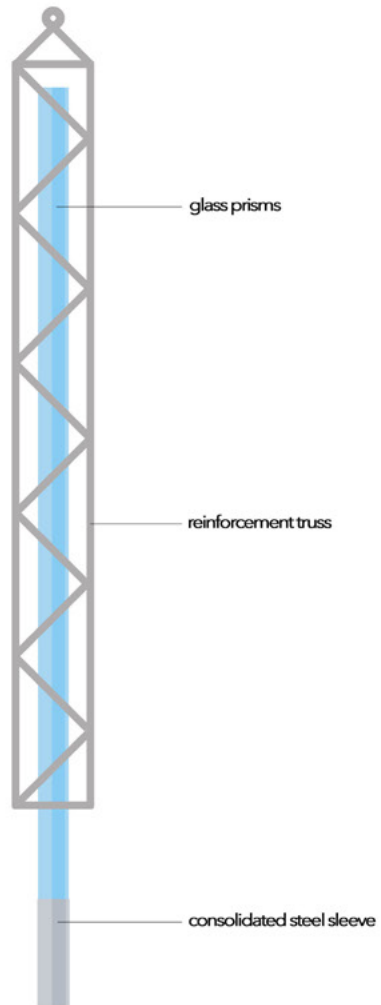
Daniel Steegmann Mangrané, March 2022



Installation schema and process

To install the prism a small concrete basis (aprox 40x60x60cm and 120kg weight) will be placed at the bottom of the river. Already prepared with a fitting hole, this basis will receive the glass prism, wich will have it's bottom reinforced with an stainless steel sleeve. To install and de-install the prism a small crane truck will be needed, as shown in the following page schema.





selected projects 2020 - 2015

A Leaf Shaped Animal Draws The Hand

Pirelli Hangar Bicocca, 2019

This exhibition pondered on the relationship between culture and nature. The artist's interest in biology led him to analyze complex ecological systems and introduce the natural world into his works. Numerous were the references to the rain forest in Brazil—such as branches, leaves, and insects—which interwoven with geometric forms and abstract motifs engendered a reflection on the complex dynamics between the elements that surround us.

A Leaf Shaped Animal Draws The Hand presented more than twenty works made from 1998 to the present time, ranging from films, virtual reality devices, holograms, sculptures, and installations, placing the physical and sensory dimension of the viewer at the heart of the project, and offering new visions of the entire corpus of works as they dialogue with one another.

The exhibition was characterized by a shift between material and immaterial experiences, expanded further through the site-specific architecture made of white transparent fabric partitions that redefined the industrial quality of Pirelli HangarBicocca, whilst both concealing and revealing the exhibited works. Like fluctuating membranes, these screens gave shape to the different areas of the show while allowing, by means of their transparency, an immediate overview of the entire exhibition.

Curated by Lucia Aspesi and Fiammetta Griccioli

Photography: Agostino Osio









Systemic Grid (fountain)

water, stones, wood, steel, concrete, pump
640x148x20 cm

La Plaça, L'Hospitalet del Llobregat, 2019

For *La Plaça* Daniel Steegmann Mangrané created a fountain, the somehow idillic natural vision beneath the urban surface of the square of a flowing river. Surprisingly the feeling is that the square was build on top of the river, and not the fountain beneath it, challenging our understanding of the given environment and enhacing its historical layerings

Steegmann Mangrané's practice encompasses a wide range of media, including film, sculpture, sound, gardens and drawing. His work focuses on the creation and migration of forms between nature, art and architecture.

The artist is particularly interested in biological and morphogenetic processes, which he uses as inspiration for the creation of works that, responding to self-imposed systems of chance and rule-based principles of composition, undermine the boundaries between organic and man-made aesthetics and the traditional separations between objects and subjects.

Curated by David Bestué

Photography: Teresa Estrada







Ne Voulais prendre ni forme, ni chair, ni matière

Institut d'Art Contemporain de Villeurbanne, 2017

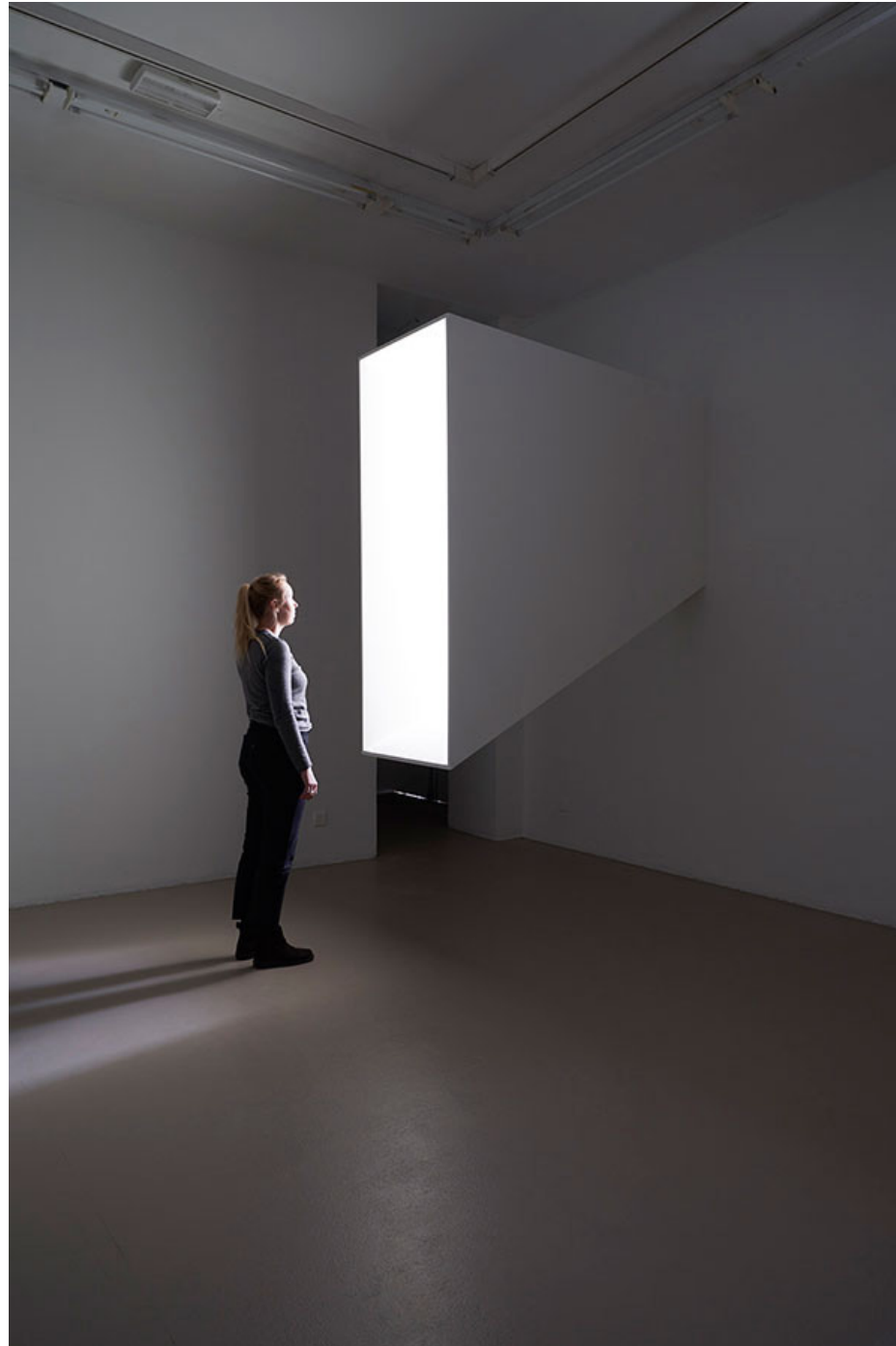
The environment proposed here by Daniel Steegmann Mangrané spread out from his film *Phasmides*, where he depicts the insect of the same name (taken from the Greek, meaning *ghost*), more commonly known as “stick insect”. Stretched out like a stick, unmoving like a plant, this mimetic species blend so well with its surroundings that it almost completely disappears, as if desiring to dissolve into its environment.

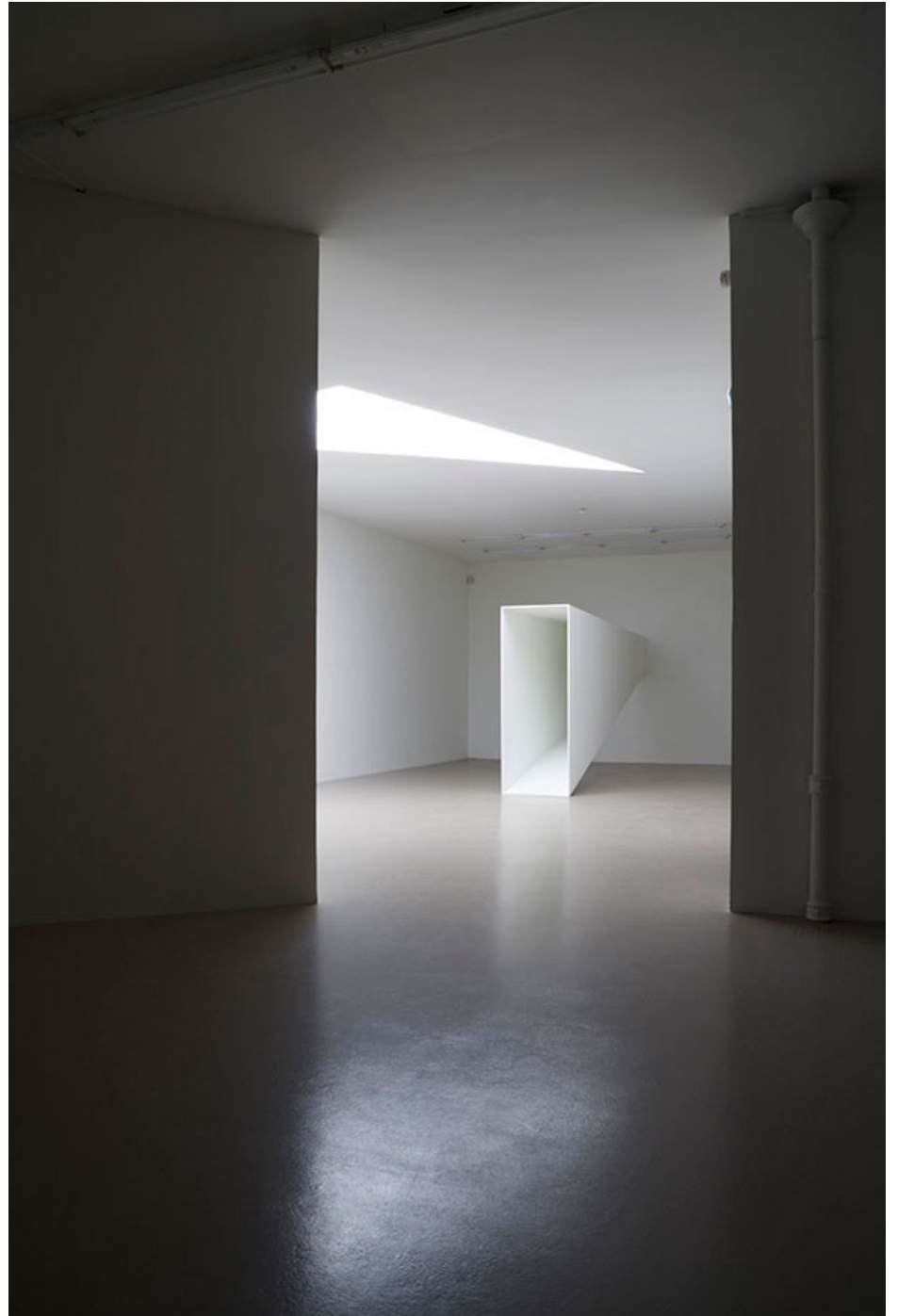
As the phasmid -appearing and disappearing like some form of living paradox- reveals the ambivalence of all being, the geometric architectural environment that Steegmann Mangrané created for the IAC highlighted the constantly evolving relationships with our environment and cancelled out any opposition that might exist between the animate and the inanimate: Background and figure, subject and object, nature and culture no longer appeared for what they are but rather for the relationships that they stimulate. The visitor was perpetually engaged in wandering along this path in between shadows and geometric openings to natural light...

The opening hours of the exhibition changed each day according to the sun. As the length of the day grow longer through the spring, exhibition opening times also increased symbolically, keeping thus pace with the natural rhythm.

Curated by Nathalie Ergino and Elli Humbert

Photography: Teresa Estrada







Living thoughts

glass branches and epiphytic plants
variable dimensions

Nottingham Contemporary, 2019

The Mata Atlântica is one of the richest world ecosystems in biodiversity, with more than 23,000 species of plants documented so far. It is also one of the most endangered environments on the planet. Working with the London-based glass-maker Jochen Holz, Steegmann Mangrané created 35 hand-blown 'branches'. Orchids, ferns, cactuses, mosses and bromeliads sprout from or attach themselves to the branches, mimicking the layering of different species that occurs in the rainforest where, in a fight for nutrients sun and water, many plants grow as epiphytes, or air plants, anchoring themselves to the branches of trees for support whilst deriving all of their nutrients and moisture from the surrounding atmosphere and falling litter. Appearing like samples or specimens, the hanging branches offered a glimpse of this dense, natural environment, like a model of the rainforest where everything but the epiphytes themselves have become invisible.

Curated by Abi Spinks

Photography: Stuart Whipps







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Metamorphosis process of a Morpho Eleonor

Fundació Tàpies, 2018

The Morpho helenor is a bright blue butterfly, abundant in tropical areas of Central and South America with a slow and elegant flight in which the electric blue upper wing surface alternates with the darker underside, creating a blinking effect that dazzles in defiance against predatory birds.

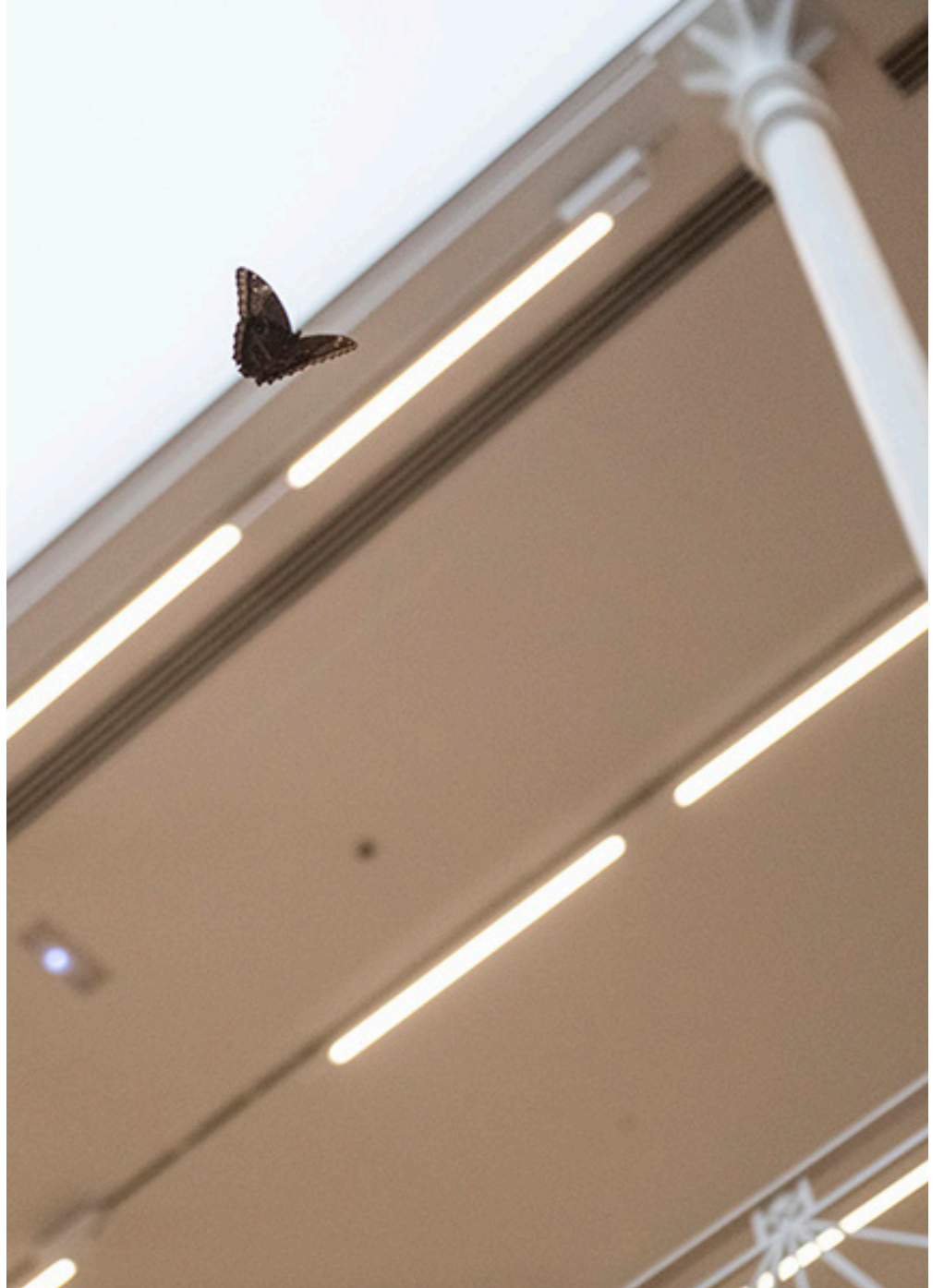
These are butterflies that like to fly in open areas such as roads, rivers or the edges of forests, avoiding the dense forest and preferring open spaces as the galleries of the museum, where the temperature and humidity were almost tropical, illumination cenital, and were fed with ripe, sweet fruit.

The chrysalide arrived 2 weeks prior to the hatching and was placed naturally hanging in a balcony of te main space, where it overcome its metamorphosis and become a butterfly. The size of the crisalide was about 3cm and the size of the adult butterfly is around 10 centimetres, so it was more than likely that visitors will overlook it in an area of 4,696 m2... a silent disruption that will very easily go unnoticed, but noetheless capable of completely changing perception and shift attention at each apparition.

Curated by Rosa Lleó

Photography: Roberto Ruiz







A Transparent Leaf Instead Of The Mouth

glass pavillion with authoctonous plants and exotic insects
280x475x445 cm

Mondes Flottants, 14 Biennale de Lyon, 2017

"[...] In the centre of the space is a curved, glass pavilion that houses a garden containing plants and animals. An ecosystem was created in the pavilion, where autochthonous trees and shrubs coexist with exotic species of stick insects and leaf insects, which feed from them in a complex web of interdependencies. These insects adopt a form of mimicry so extreme as a life strategy that they dissolve into their surrounding environment, raising philosophical questions about the boundaries between the subject and its environment in a system of consumptions, transfigurations and metamorphoses, both real and symbolic. "

Curated by Emma Lavigne

Photography: Andrea Rossetti









The Tangled Tree

brass, nickel and steel cables,
700x450x330 cm

Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, 2018

Inspired in filogenetics and how this branch of the living sciences has challenged the understanding of natural evolution, showing that parts of our genetic code originated in other branches of the evolutionary tree and includes also parts from the bacterial and the archaerial domains, The Tangled Tree proposes a aesthetic “lateral transfer” of an “unroted tree” biological model.

Curated by Renato Silva

Photography: Bruno Leão







Jardin Vertical (Kiti Ka'aeté)

public vertical garden

São Paulo, 2016

For a renovation plan for the city of São Paulo Daniel Steegmann Mangrané designed a vertical garden inspired in the geometric crafts of the local indigenous Tupí Guaraní tribes. Made of romboids and triangles emerging in geometric patterns of endemic plants as bromeliads or begonias, the garden lives just with the water of the rainfall, balances the heat and cold transfer of the building to its surroundings and diminishes the heat sensation in almost 20 degrees celsius compared to the concrete wall were it now grows.

Once a year a fine line of yellow bromeliads bloom creating a geometric drawing of delicate flowers

Curated by Matthew Wood

Photography by Bruno Leão







Espaço Avenca

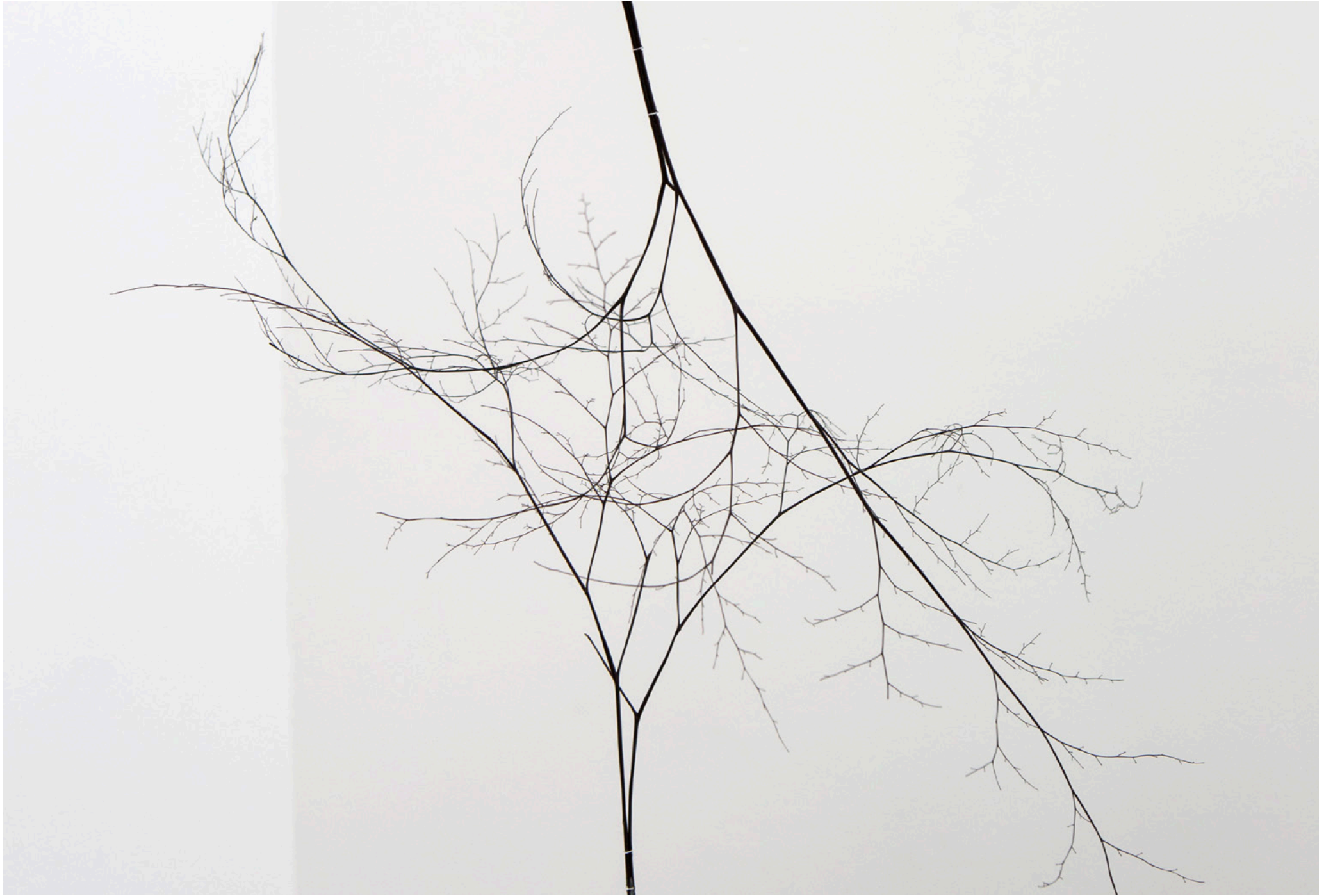
avenca fern branches,
55x45x33 cm

Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, 2015

The same way a drawing might have a concrete size but no specific scale, which allows to use the the same sheet of paper to draw a cell or a entire galaxy, Espaço Avenca has a reduced size but infinite dimensions. The complex tangled space between it's intertwined branches opens to the inside multiplying it's scale as the viewers loss track of the room were they stand, and become as tiny as desired - the other way around is also true.

Photography: Bruno Leão





curriculum vitae 2020 - 2015

Solo Shows

2020

Fog Dog, Esther Schipper, Berlin
Dog Eye, Kunsthalle Münster, Münster
Lacrimae rerum, Dvir Gallery, Tel Aviv
Fog Dog, MAC Niteroi

2019

The word for world is forest, Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham
Ne voulais pendre ni forme, ni chair, ni matière, Institut d'Art Contemporain de Villeurbaine
A Leaf Shaped Animal Draws The Hand, Hangar Bicocca, Milan

2018

Phantom, CAC Vilnius, Vilnius
---'- --'-, Fundació Tàpies, Barcelona
A Transparent Leaf Instead Of The Mouth, CCS Bard College, New York
The Tangled Tree, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo
Esther Schipper Bookshop, Berlin

2017

A Transparent Leaf Instead Of The Mouth, Museu Serralves, Porto

2016

did not want to have human form, human flesh or human matter, The Green Parrot, Barcelona
(Paisaje de posibilidades), MAMM, Medellín
I am pure gas, air, empty space, time, Fotograf Gallery, Prague

2015

Spiral Forest, Esther Schipper, Berlin
Three points in the same line and three points that don't belong to the same line, Múrias Centeno, Lisboa
Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro
Casa Modernista, São Paulo
Kingdom of all the animals and all the beasts is my name, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo
Lafayette Anticipation, Lafayette Foundation, Paris

Selected group shows

2021

Tree Story, MUMA, Melbourne
Uma historia natural das ruínas, Pivô, São Paulo
The Port And The Stomach, Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool
At The Luss House, Luss House, NY
Curtain, ParaSite, Hong Kong

2020

Seismic Movements, Dhaka Art Summit, Dhaka
The Port And The Stomach, Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool
The Dreamers, Belgrade Biennale/58 October Salon, Belgrade
Taipei Biennale, Taipei

2019

Les Attentions, Le Credac, Paris
Konkrete Gegenwart, Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich
de l'immersion à l'osmose, Frac Île de France / Le Chateau, Rantilly
La Plaça, L'Hospitalet del Llobregat, Barcelona
Bial Leandre Cristòfol, Lleida
Last Letter, Dvir Gallery, Tel Aviv

2018

colección MACBA, Manarat Al Saadiyat, Abu Dhabi
Dreaming Awake, Marres, Maastricht
Mixed Realities, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart
Enchanted Bodies, GaMEC, Bergamo
We where raised in the internet, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
Fundação Iberé Camargo, Porto Alegre
Space Shifters, Hayward Gallery, London

2017

G2 Kunsthalle, Sammlung Hildebrandt, Leipzig
Hercules Florence, Nouveau Musée National de Monaco
Cosmic Spring, Centre Pompidou, Metz
Biotopia, Kunsthalle Mainz
Pedra no céu, MuBE, São Paulo
Unanimous Night, CAC Vilnius
Mondes Flotants, 14th Biennale de Lyon

2016

Now/here, Franz Josef Kai 3, Wien
The World Was Flat..., Museo de Arte de Zapopán, Guadalajara, México
Misiones Geodésicas, Centro Cultural Metropolitano de Quito
Prediction, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo
Brazil, Beleza?, Museum Beelden aan Zee, The Hague
The present in drag, Berlin Biennale, Berlin
Where Text is Broken By a Building... Arario Art Museum, Seoul
Por aqui tudo é novo... Inhotim, Brumadinho
Completely something else, Point Centre for Contemporary Art, Cyprus

2015

Construire une collection, Nouveau Musée National de Monaco
Cannibalia, Kadist Foundation, Paris
Sorround Audience, New Museum Triennial, New York
FOMO, Friche Belle de Mai, Marseille
Beauty Codes, Fondazione Giuliani, Roma
Axololtisme, Nogueras Blanchard, Madrid
Tunnel Vision, Momentum Bienale, Oslo
Species d'espaces, MACBA, Barcelona
Beauty Codes, Kunsthalle Lissabon, Lisbon
United States of Latin America, MCA Detroit
Composiciones, Umbracle, Botanical Garden, Barcelona
Co-Workers: Beyond disaster, Bétonsalon, Paris
Kiti Ka'aeté, The Modern Institute, Glasgow
The World Was Flat..., Bildmuseet, Umeå
Times Museum, Guangzhou

Museum Collections

Tate Modern, London
Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro
Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, Monaco
Inhotim, Brumadinho
Castello di Rivoli, Torino
Centro de Arte 2 de Mayo, Madrid
MUSAC, León
Museu Serralves, Porto
Fundació la Caixa, Barcelona
Cisneros collection, Caracas - New York
François Pinault, Venice
Rubell Collection, Miami
Fondazione Morra Greco, Napoli
TBA21 - Thyssen Bornemisza Contemporary, Vienna
Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo
Colección JUMEX, México
MACBA, Barcelona
Samdani Art Foundation, Bangladesh
Kadist Art Foundation, Paris
Collection Foundation Lafayette, Paris
Philara, Dusseldorf
Samdani Art Foundation, Bangladesh
Si Shang Art Museum, Beijing
FRAC Île-de-France, Paris
Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín, Medellín
FRAC Alsace, Selestat
Remai Modern, Saskatoon
Musée d'art contemporain de la Haute-Vienne, Rochechouart

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