

Kinship in Transformation

Art-Science series

Biographies

Zheng Bo (1974, Beijing) is an ecoqueer artist of ethnic Bai heritage. Through drawing, dance, and film, they cultivate kinship with plants: ferns in Taiwan, moss in Scandinavia, beech trees in Germany, and an umbrella thorn acacia in the Arabian Desert. Guided by Daoist wisdom, Zheng Bo work with both human and nonhuman dancers to grow weedy gardens, biophilia films, and ecosocialist gatherings. For them, art does not arise from human creativity, but more-than-human intimacy, contributing to an emergent planetary indigeneity through their ecological practice. Recent exhibitions include institutional solos at Gropius Bau (Berlin) and Göteborgs Konsthall (Gothenburg), public commissions at Jameel Arts Centre (Dubai) and Rockbund Art Museum (Shanghai), and participation in the 59th Venice Biennale. Their works are in the collections of Tate (London), Power Station of Art (Shanghai), Hong Kong Museum of Art, Singapore Art Museum, and Hammer Museum (Los Angeles).

Eva Bossow (1983) is an entrepreneur active in the fields of organizational and strategic development, knowledge transfer, and innovation for art and cultural institutions. Additionally, she advises startups in the creative industries and supports spin-offs transitioning from academia to practice. As a foundation board member, Eva Pauline Bossow is now engaged with the House of Electronic Arts in Basel and serves as a co-host of the official podcast “Kunstlicht” at the Zurich University of the Arts ZHdK, monthly bridging the gap from the arts to various disciplines.

Monica Gagliano's main research is broadly focusing on key aspects of the ecological processes by which organisms are able to gather information on the variable conditions of their surrounding environment in order to thrive. In collaboration with various disciplines across the Sciences and the Humanities, her research aims at expanding our perception of animals, plants and more generally Nature. In the process of learning how to do this, she has pioneered the brand-new research field of plant bioacoustics and extended the concept of cognition to plants, re-igniting the discourse on plant subjectivity, sentience and ethical standing.

Industria Indipendente is a Rome-based performing and visual arts collective founded by Erika Z. Galli and Martina Ruggeri. Their works always articulate questions and reflections: the “unproductive” dimension of time, the creation of alternative and fictional worlds where communities and alliances are formed, a constant overturning and recreation of individual and collective identities. They conduct a research process that has produced hybrid formats and spaces, and create also four-handed landscapes and performances that combine tattooing, live music, writing, theory and knowledge sharing with live music and DJ sets. This research converges every month in Merende (Angelo Mai, Rome), a site-specific and immersive queer long happening based on the concepts of sharing and offering and in which Industria Indipendente invites and works with other artists, activists and theorists.

In their various forms of manifestation, they participated in international festivals, expositions and venues such as Romaeuropa Festival, Macro Museum, Short Theatre (Rome), Fondazione Merz (Palermo/Turin), La Biennale (Venice), Cabaret Voltaire (Zurich), Istituto Svizzero (Rome), Fog (Milan, Triennale), ActOral (Marseille), Contemporanea (Prato), Santarcangelo Festival (Santarcangelo di Romagna) and others. In 2017, some of their writings were published by Cue Press, translated, and staged in 4 languages (Czech, French, German, and Romanian). Klub Taiga (Dear Darkness), premiered at the 48th edition of the Biennale Teatro (Venice, September 2020). From the work for the theatre and stage emerged: a vinyl record (NERO edizioni, 2022), a film (by visual artist Rà Di Martino), and an installation format for exhibition spaces (Fondazione Sandretto, Turin-Palazzo Guarene, May-July 2022). They have debuted at the National Theatre of Rome with the show Left Hand (June 2023), a performative, visual, and acoustic space.

Mirjam Janett studied history and social anthropology at the University of Zurich. She is currently postdoc at the Historical Institute of the University of Berne. Her fields of research are history of the family and childhood, history of science and gender, disability history, women's and gender history. She is interested in questions of normality and deviance, processes of in- and exclusion in 19th and 20th century Western societies, and cultures of resistance and activism. Her current project examines the critique of patriarchy and capitalism in left-wing feminism at the end of the 19th century from a body-historical perspective. Her latest publication is: Der alternative Mann als generisches Individuum. Geschlechter- und Klassenverhältnisse in Fritz Brupbachers Autobiografie, in: L'homme. Schriften 29 (2024) (Männer über sich, hg. von Maximiliane Berger, Mirjam Hähle, Anna Leyrer).

Wanuri Kahiu is a filmmaker, speaker, and science fiction writer. Kahiu's award-winning film PUMZI was screened at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival as part of its New African Cinema program. Her next film, RAFIKI, was the first Kenyan film to be invited to Cannes Film Festival and has since won multiple awards across the world. Kahiu is a cultural leader for the World Economic Forum, an advocate for Freedom of Expression, and an AFROBUBBLEGUM activist – championing the need for the creation and curation of fun, fierce, and frivolous African art. Kahiu is a director for WASHINGTON BLACK for Hulu/ 20th Century Fox which completed principal photography in 2022 - an adaptation of the book by Esi Edugyan. She's director of the NETFLIX film, LOOK BOTH WAYS starring Lili Reinhart, Luke Wilson and Nia Long, released in August 2022, and is attached to direct ONCE ON THIS ISLAND for Disney. Kahiu was named TIME's 100 Next in 2019.

Laura Perler studied social anthropology, public law and gender studies at the University of Berne. Her doctoral thesis at the University of St. Gallen focused on transnational egg donation in Spain and the related reproductive technologies. Her book "Selektioniertes Leben - Eine feministische Perspektive auf die Eizellenspende" was published in 2022 by Edition Assemblage. Since 2018, she has been working in the unit of social and cultural geography in Bern, where she also collaborates closely with mLAB coordinator Mirko Winkel. As part of a new SNSF project, Laura is now working more generally on reproductive geopolitics, focusing on sexual and reproductive health inequalities in the Swiss asylum system. Laura's research interests include reproductive politics, bioeconomy, feminist technoscience, migration, care work and feminist theories in general.

Laura Tripaldi is a researcher and writer. Her transdisciplinary work focuses on the question of materiality and explores the interface of body and technology. She holds a PhD in Materials Science and Nanotechnology and has taught courses, workshops and seminars in cultural and academic institutions worldwide, including the Basel Academy of Art and Design, TBA21, Medialab Matadero, University of Roma Tre, and Scuola Holden. She is the author of Gender tech (Laterza, 2023), Corpi ambigui (Einaudi, 2021), and Parallel Minds (Urbanomic, 2022).

Sarah Shinis a writer, publisher, researcher and curator whose work includes making books, films, texts, gardens, games, scents, spaces, portals and practices. Interested in symbolism and science fiction, she is writing a novel of nested realities and multiple worlds, weaving together dreams, ekphrasis and ancient and emerging understandings of consciousness and cosmos. Her collaborations include, with Mark Lowe, a film documenting devotion and structures of transformation, and with Sammy Lee, Mirror, a video game that journeys through a mythical world of correspondences, and Cornucopia dream tarot. She is a founder and director of Ignota, a creative publishing and curatorial house; Silver Press, the feminist publisher; New Suns literary festival at the Barbican Centre; and Standard Deviation, a multidisciplinary collective exploring the coincidence of psychic, geometric and inhabited spaces.

Yvonne Volkart is head of research and lecturer of art theory and cultural media studies at the Institute Art Gender Nature, Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW. She also holds a teaching position at Zurich University of the Arts and works as freelance curator and art critic. From 2022-25 she directs the SNSF-research project "Plants_Intelligence. Learning Like a Plant". In 2023, her monograph Technologies of Care. From Sensing Technologies to an Aesthetics of Attention has been published (Zürich: diaphanes).

Mirko Winke is an artist, curator, and managing director of the transdisciplinary laboratory mLAB at the Institute of Geography of the University of Bern, and an artistic and scientific research associate at Bern Academy of the Arts (EcoArtLab). His research-based, context-sensitive work ranges from performance, video, and lectures to discussion formats and proposals for improvement. Together with Laura Perler he is part of the SNSF-funded project "Reproductive Geopolitics" and works on various exhibition projects.