

RICCARDO ARENA

PORTFOLIO

www.riccardoarena.org
arenarama@gmail.com
+39 338 2758534

ARTIST STATEMENT

My work is based on a creative process that consists in the accumulation, collation and study of heterogeneous documents. These documents, in the process of assemblage, come to reveal accidental and unforeseen potentialities that become active agents in themselves, participating in the creation of an artwork that evolves independently from the first inspirational impulse. The work is conceived as a poetic formalization of the research.

The collected material becomes a living entity, containing the forms and movements of its creative development. Within the interaction of documents, intuitions and constructions, the effort of my research is to trace and contemplate their inner bonds and to unveil potential energies so as to bring out their vivifying nature and the occult architecture that supports and sustains them.

Moved by these objectives, over the years, I have dedicated myself to developing long-term projects in different countries of the world: in China with "Four Times a Tree" (2006/2008), in Argentina with "Dual death Ellero and visual ecosystem" (2009/2012), Russia with "Vavilon" (2013/2017) and Iran, Armenia and Ethiopia with "LuDD! - Topography of Light", which is currently in production.

The scheduled time for completion and the contents of these projects were defined through a series of accidental events that came about in the course of my travels and research.

The constant flitting between travelling experience, gathering of study materials and their internal and intuitive reconfiguration, is condensed into complex narrative structures that become the fundamental principle of the work: installations, collages, films, texts, lectures and workshops; all of these are all orchestrated into a constellation in mutual dialogue, which becomes a vehicle for multiple references and interpretations.

Each project aims to encompass several lines of investigation relating to science, metaphysics, cultural and natural landscapes, poetry, religion and to a whole series of founded and unfounded theories. These theories escape their contours and transcend any kind of cultural background.

In response to the plethora of themes that have nourished the visual and narrative work, the projects have resulted in a number of conferences and talks held by scholars and researchers. These events are intended as compositional pictures of visions and analysis, of theoretical and descriptive overviews.

My works were recently exhibited at: ITALIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE OF ADDIS ABEBA, Ethiopia, MERKUROV MUSEUM, TRIENNIAL OF CONTEMPORARY ART IN ARMENIA, Gyumri; MAXXI, Rome; IMMA, Dublin, CENTROPECCI, Prato; QUADRIENNALE D'ARTE, Rome; VIAFARINI, Milan; FONDAZIONE SANDRETTO RE REBAUDENGO, Turin; PREMIO FURLA, Palazzo Reale, Milan; MART, Rovereto; MAGA, Gallarate; MUSEO DEL NOVECENTO, Milan; 54th VENICE BIENNALE, Buenos Aires/Venice; 1918ARTSPACE, Shanghai. He took part to workshops and residences like: KOOSHK Residency, Theran; IN FAVOUR OF A TOTAL ECLIPSE, Fiorucci Art Trust, Stromboli; VIR, Viagarini Residency, Milan. He was selected as a finalist for the MAXXI PRICE 2017 and won the National Prize LONG PLAY - XXIV, by MAGA, Gallarate and the First Prize at MANUALMENTE, Varese.

SELECTED PROJECTS

ĀSHKHĀRHĀTZŪYTZ

Visual Chrestomathy of the Mount Analogue Inland Peak Expedition

STANDART 2017 - Triennial of Contemporary art in Armenia

S. D. Merkurov's Museum, Gyumri

The installation is inspired by *The Mount Analogue*, a symbolic novel of mountaineering geographic adventures by René Daumal, left unfinished due to the premature death of the author.

zAshkharhatzuytz - Visual Chrestomathy of the Mount Analogue Inland Peak Expedition imagines, through a visual compendium inspired by passages of Daumal's novel and its missing part, the mystical topography of the summit of the Mount Analogue, which for the same analogical reason must necessarily be quarried. Introducing inside the external specular landscape, the climb is celebrated in the descent to the abyss where the upper skies are disbanded.



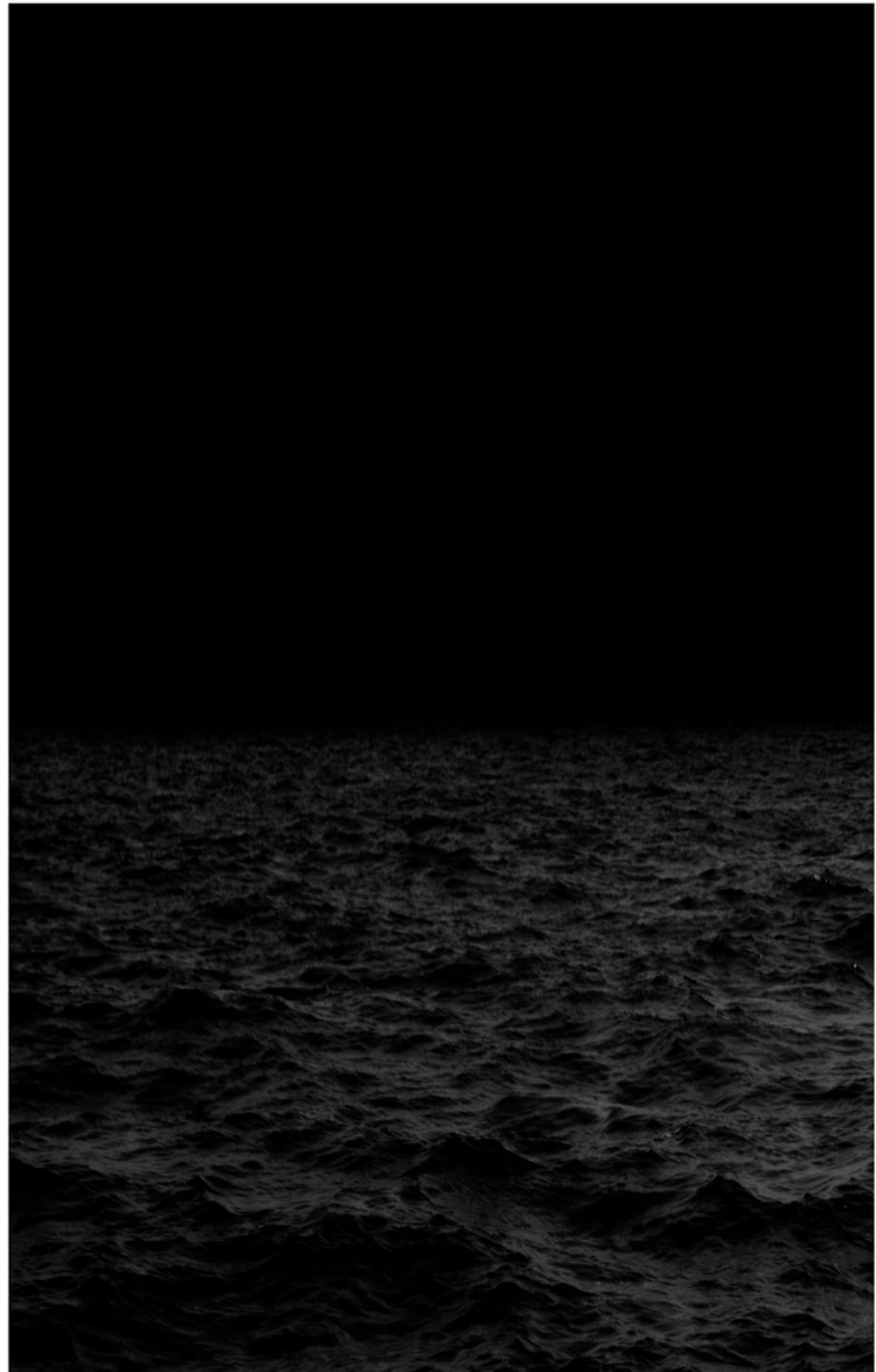




ORIENT 1 - Everlasting Sea

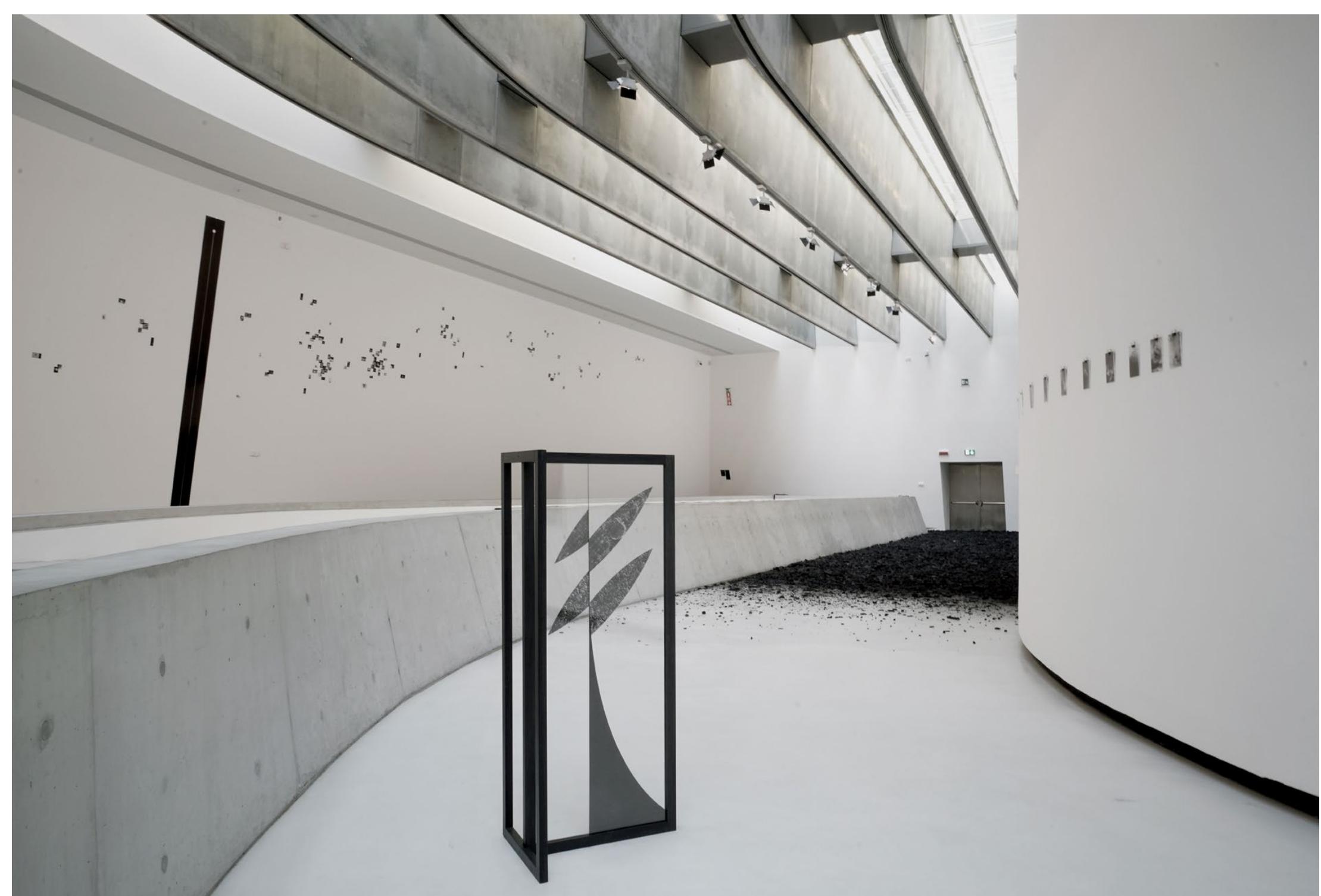
MAXXI PRICE, National Museum of the 21st Century Arts, Rome

Starting from the suggestions developed by Russian Cosmism, Orient 1 contemplates the exploration of a "Terra incognita", that, by mirroring the cartography of the Moon and the Earth, evokes an atlas without geography, in which distances and landscapes are nullified: a reproduction of the monument dedicated to Russian cosmonauts rises from a coal crater; a wall painting refers to Kazimir Malevi's Suprematist Square; pictures of sailing boats drifting into obscure lunar oceans; Boris Godunov's musical notes by Modest Musorgskij (used as a secret code for Russian aerospace launches) brings the viewer in an unfathomable time. The multiple elements of the installation shape the millennial human tension towards the unknown, reflecting on the inscrutability of the forces that move his wanderings in a metaphysical space.



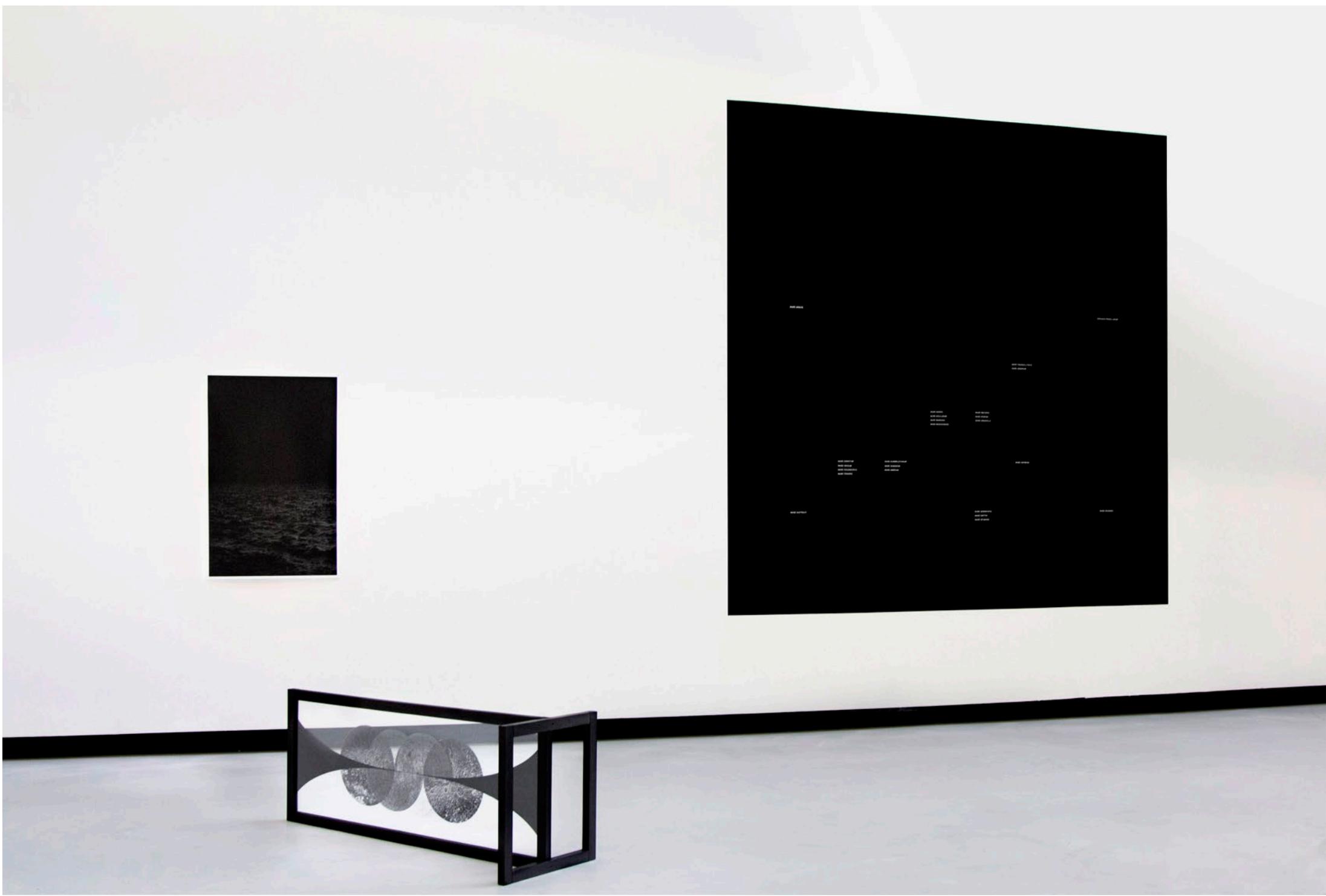


Exhibition View - Photography by Luis Do Rosario

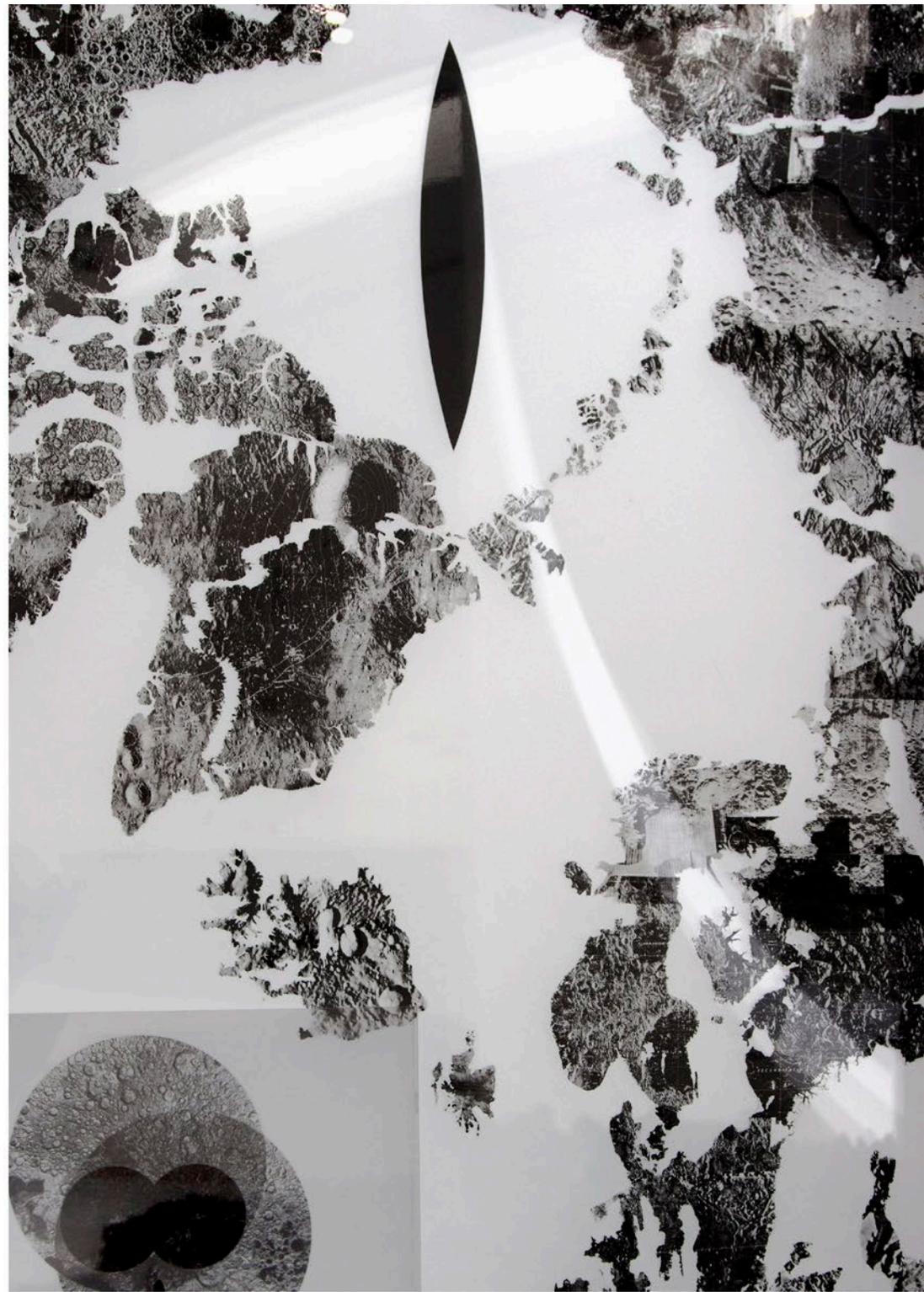


Exhibition View - Photography by Luis Do Rosario





Exhibition View - Photography by Luis Do Rosario





Exhibition View - Photography by Luis Do Rosario

THE PLOUGH, AND OTHER STARS

IMMA, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland 2016

This exhibition proposes some alternatives to death – space travel, time travel, reincarnation. Works by Riccardo Arena, Richard John Jones, Lara Khaldi and Yazan Khalili are brought together in the immortal domain of the museum, to explore strategies towards life extension, by artistic if not other means. The exhibition functions as both a show, for people to come and visit, and a rehearsal space for the development of a new theatrical production, in collaboration with Cow House Studios and The Centre For Dying On Stage.

Kete Strain





VAVILON | Project C - Solovki Island

CRATER OF ETERNAL LIGHTNESS - IIC Addis Ababa, 2018

VAVILON, Viafarini, Milan, 2015

THE MAN WHO SAT ON HIMSELF, Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, 2015

ALTRI MITI ALTRI TEMPI, Quadriennale d'arte, Rome, 2016

LA FINE DEL MONDO, Centro Pecci, Prato, 2016

VAVILON project develops from the studies and suggestions that arise from the research conducted on the Solovki Islands, an archipelago located in the Russian White Sea, at 160 km from the Northern Pole. Through history the archipelago became a place of worship for the ancient nomadic populations, a realm for asceticism and mysticism, an orthodox sanctuary, and more recently the site of the first Soviet forced labour camps, Gulag. The Islands are at the same time witness of the utopias and the dystopias, battlefield of ideologic wars and a place for redemption. The inputs for the artistic investigation were a travel experience on the Islands in 2013 and the study of the less renowned aspects of the Russian culture. In particular the Russian Cosmism, that represents a common ground of the totalitarianistic system and that characterized all the history of the Soviet spaceship program, aimed to pursue the immortality through the cosmic escape from the labyrinth of mortality.

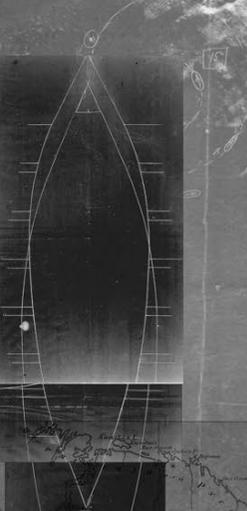
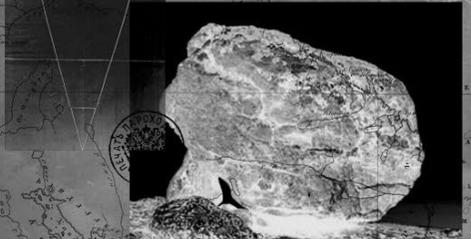
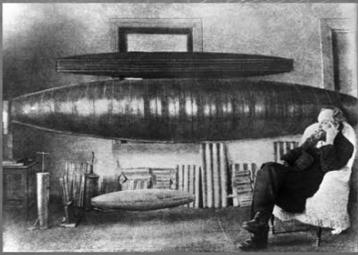
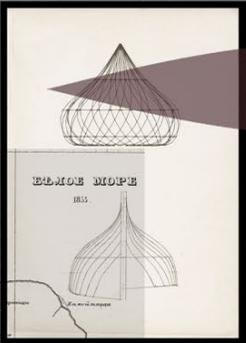
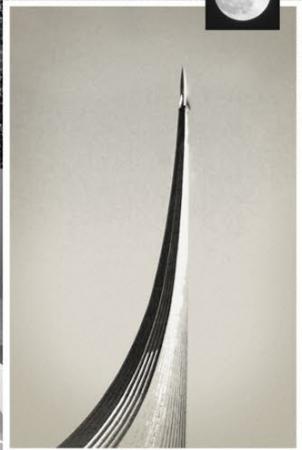
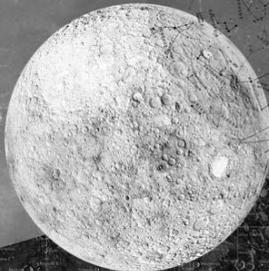
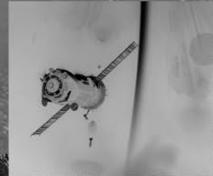


VAVILON | installation view | Viafarini, Milano | 2015



VAVILON | installation view | Viafarini, Milano | 2015







VAVILON | installation view | Viafarini, Milano | 2015







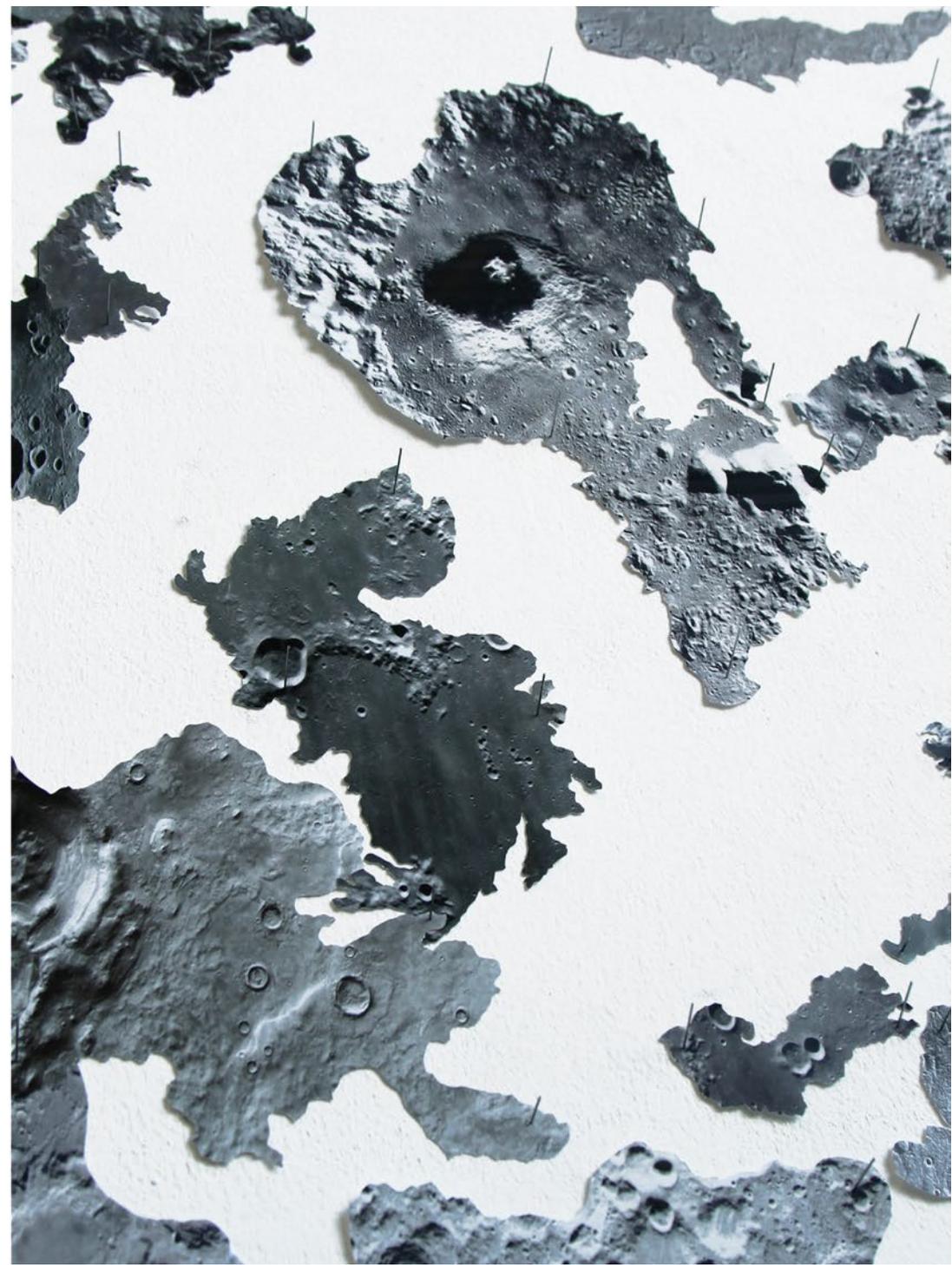
VAVILON | installation view | Viafarini, Milano | 2015



VAVILON | Screen printing, 25 Editions, 35cm x 50cm | 2015



VAVILON | installation view | Viafarini, Milano | 2015



VAVILON | Paper cut collage, 120cm x 120cm | 2015

VAVILON

Video HD, Dur 26 min, 2015

Music and sound: Matteo Mariano,
Featuring music composer: Nicola Ratti
In Collaboration with: Fiorucci Art Trust







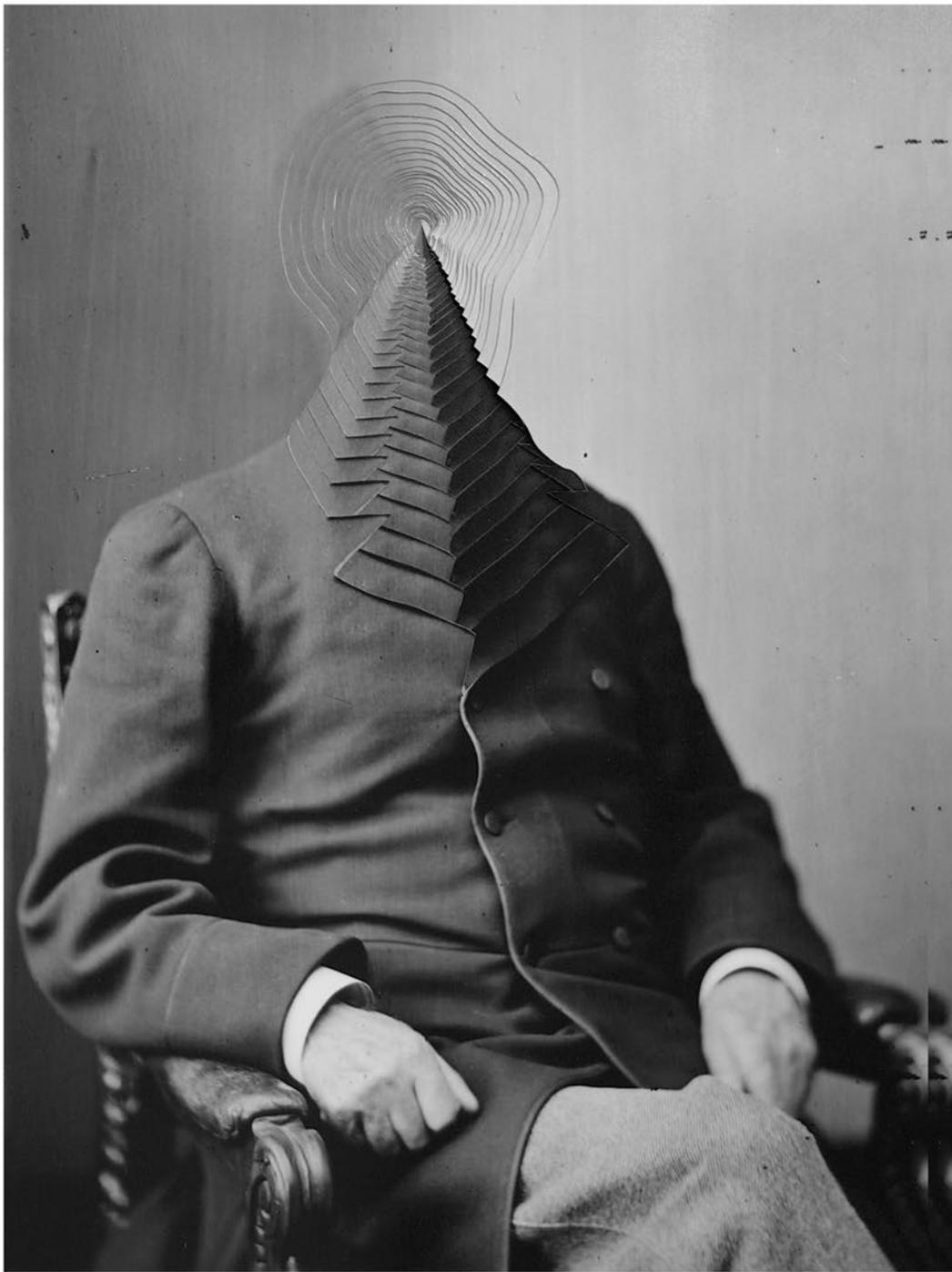
**Dual death Ellero and visual ecosystem
Project B - Argentina**

**RACCONTARE IL PRESENTE, Italian Cultural Institute of London, 2016
LONG PLAY, XXIV ed. del Premio Nazionale Arti Visive MAGA, Gallarate, 2012
2011 MUERTE DUAL ELLERO, Galeria Wussmann, Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA
54th Venice Biennial - Padigione Italia nel Mondo**

“Dual Death Ellero and visual ecosystem” began in a Tibetan village in Sichuan and developed after a series of trips between Argentina and Bolivia. This project was inspired by the first fingerprint classification techniques; through an articulated physiognomic investigation conducted by a detective in search of an imaginary face. It reflects historically and symbolically on the differences between observation and contemplation, questioning the concepts of identity, identification, indivisibility and multiplicity.



Duplici morte Ellero ed ecosistema visivo | installation view | MAGA, Gallarate | 2012
Photography by Roberto Marossi



Lichtloch # 1- 2 -3 | Paper Cut Collage | 50cm x 40cm | 2011

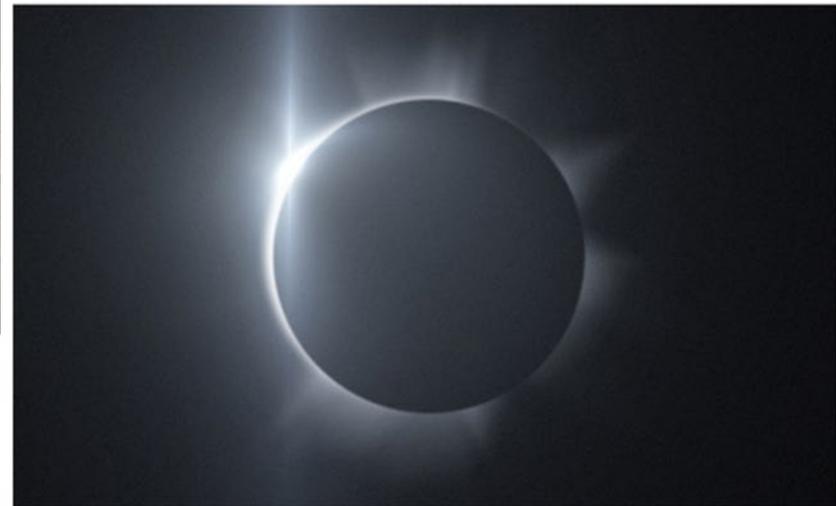


Colui che non è più alcuno | Paper Cut Collage | 135cm x 135cm | 2011

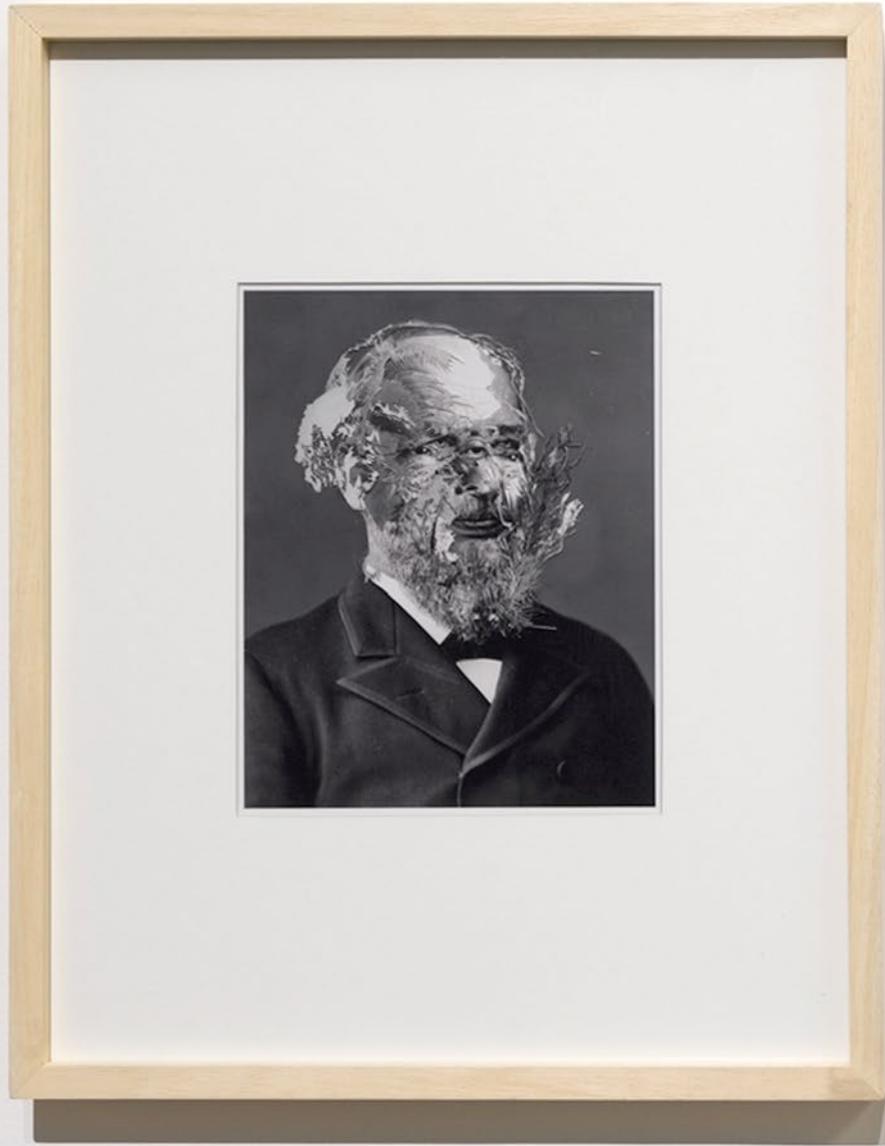




Duplica morte Ellero ed ecosistema visivo | Exhibition view | Galeria Wussman | Buenos Aires | 2011



View from the window at Le Gras | Video | Dur. 16min. | 2012



Physiognomic Investigation | Paper cut collage | 50 x 40cm | 2011



Geode-Cristallizzazione | 50 x 50cm | Digital Print | 2011

FOUR TIMES A TREE **Project A - China**

FOUR TIMES A TREE, TILT Space, Lausanne, 2011
IL QUATTRO VOLTE ALBERO, Mayr3 - Allegra Ravizza Art Project, Milan, 2009
FOUR TIMES A TREE, 1918ArtSpace, Shanghai, 2008

“Four Times a Tree”, elaborated through a series of journeys in China between 2006 and 2008, develops from the idea of “nature reserve”, garden or park, as a microcosmic reiteration of the universe. Describing the vision of a Chinese garden created by a catastrophic event, it narrates the adventure of this human generation, whose presence is felt through the harmonization of its remains in a melancholy celebration of a mythical future.



And all the Gods huddled themselves against the wall like stray dogs | Lambda print | 110 x 165 cm | 2008

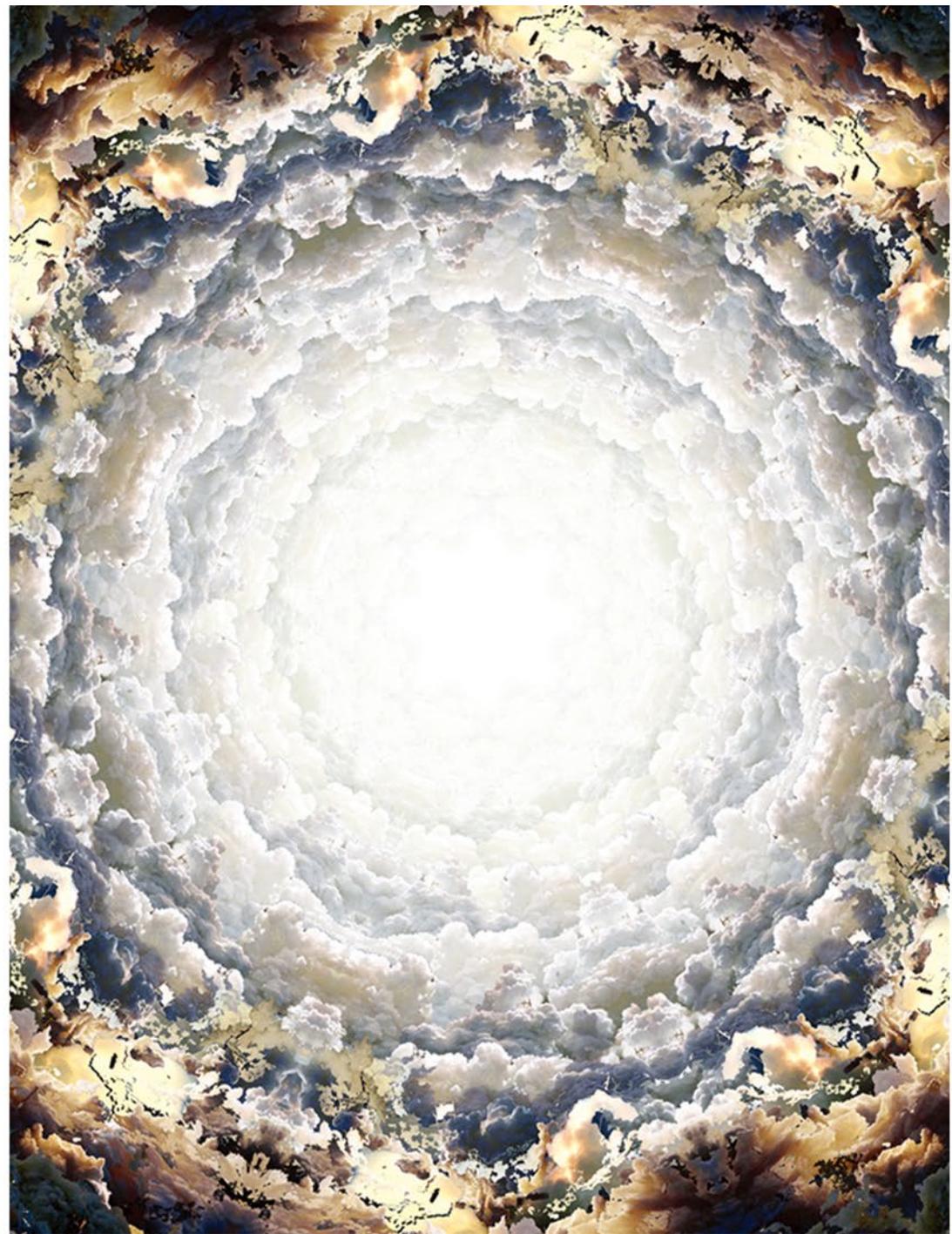


Four Times a Tree | Exhibition view | 1918 ArtSpace, Shanghai 2008 | Mayr3 , Milan 2009



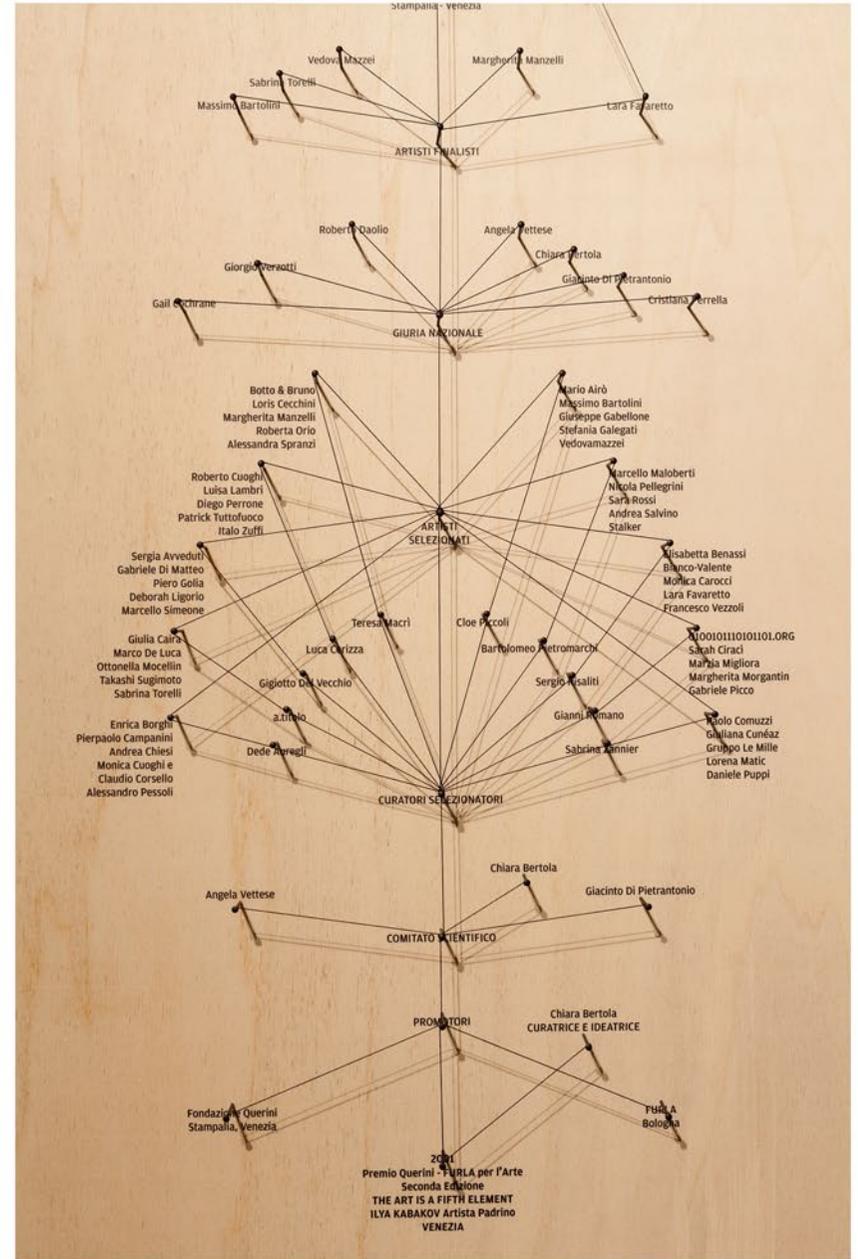


Another 18.000 years of coagulation | Lambda print | 110 x 165 cm | 2008

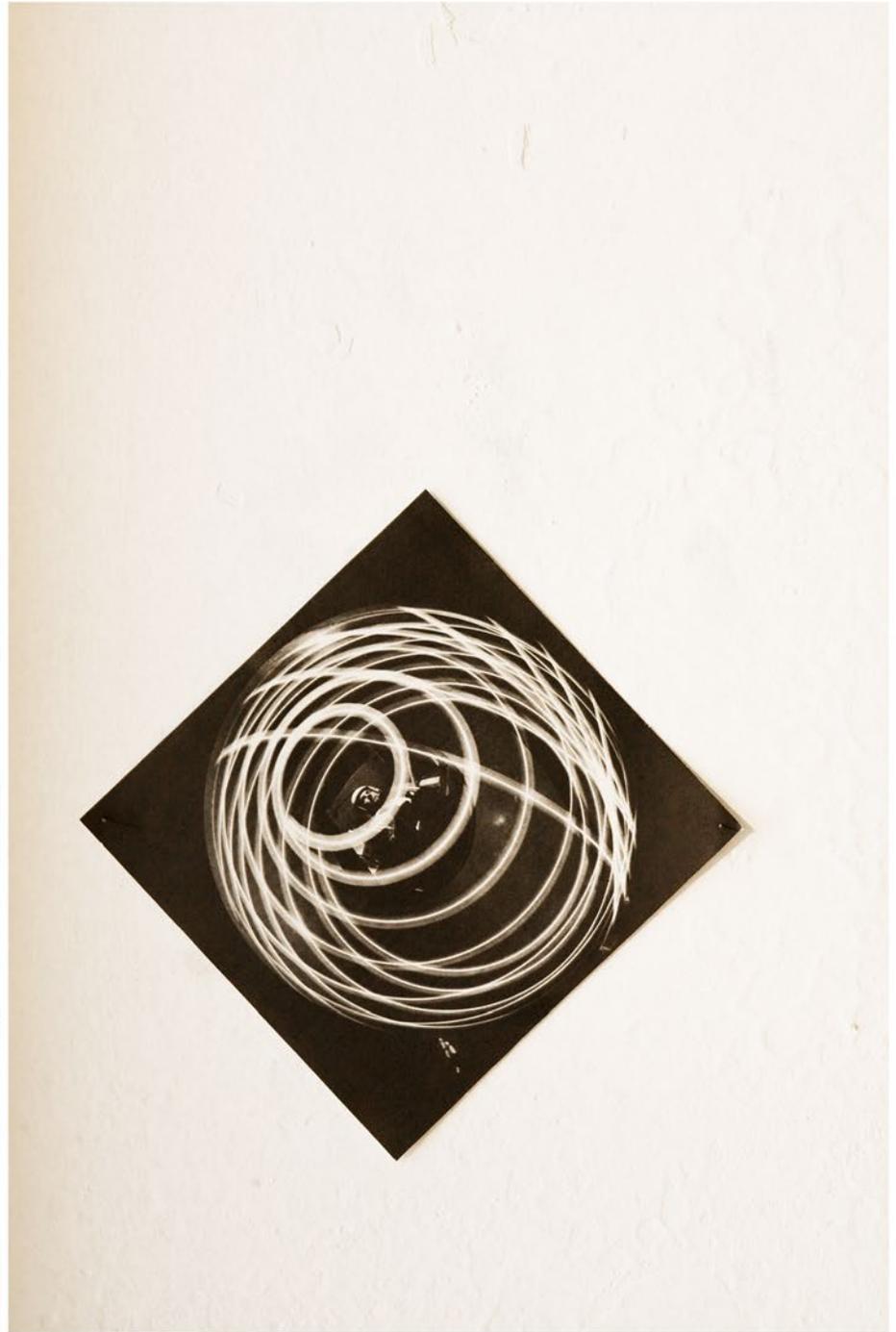


The light became intense, our souls full of joy, we lost our memory 62 hours before vanishing forever
Paper cut collage | 110 x 110 cm | 2008

SELECTED WORKS



GROWING ROOTS | Installation view | Palazzo Reale, Milano | 2015



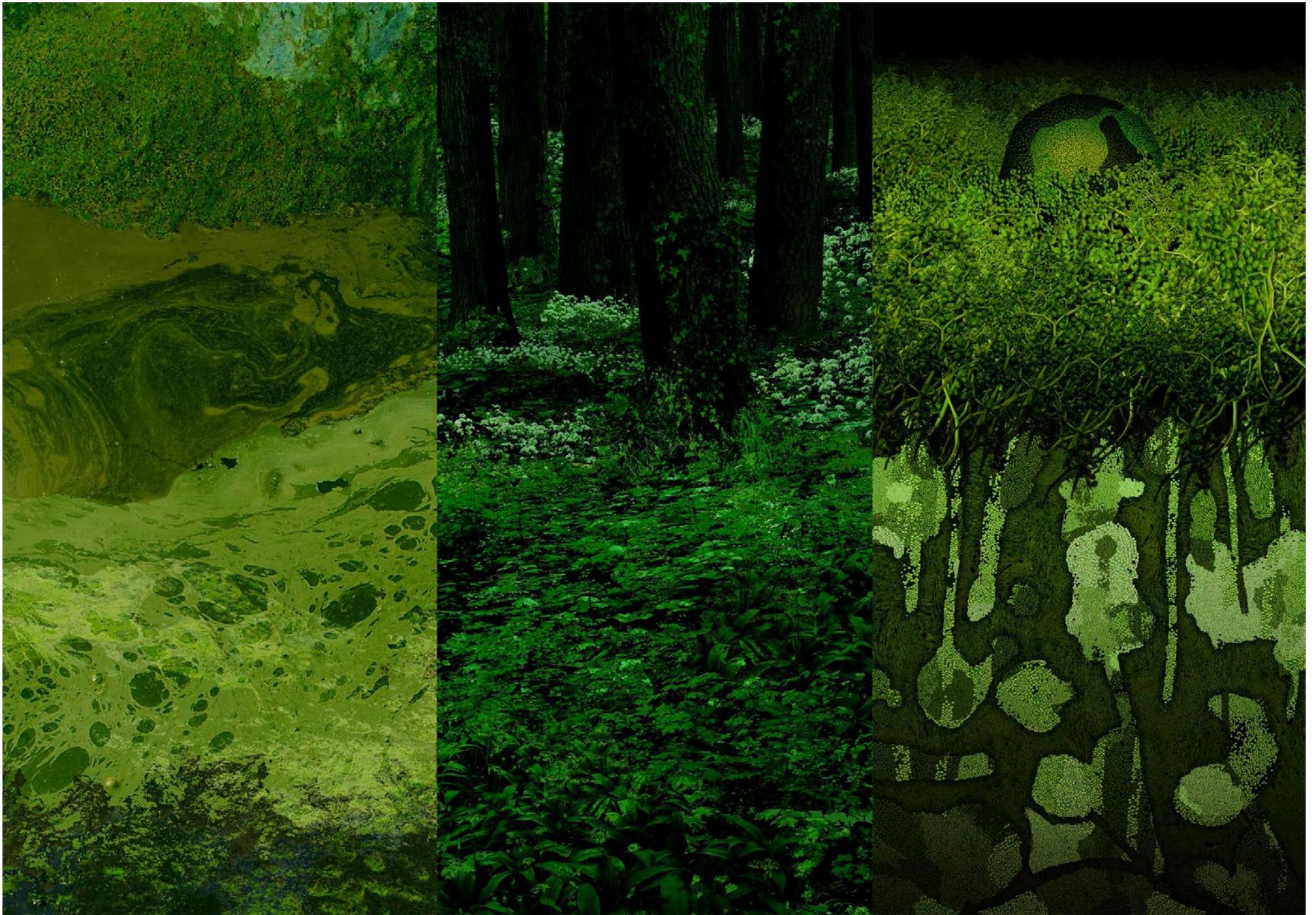
HOW EARLY MEN BELIEVED THAT ALL THINGS THAT MOVE ARE ALIVE | Installation view | Ammirato Culture House | 2014



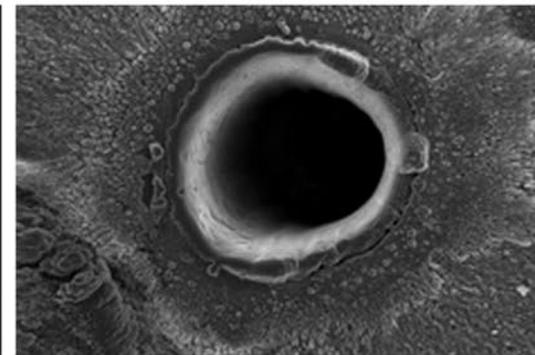
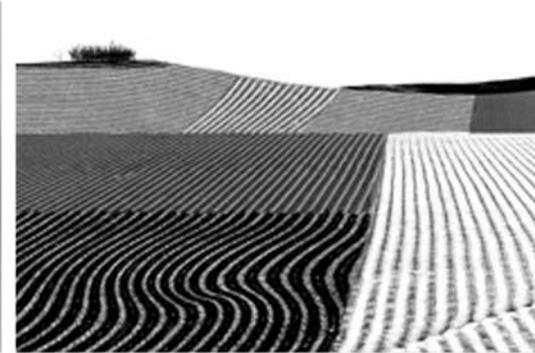




Installazione N°305: Anche la galleria N°305 chiude per sempre
Ceramic hand paint | 12m x 4m | Installation view | Viagarini, Milan | 2007



JAMES P. | Video | Dur. 15. min. | 2006



The mills of God grind slowly | Installation view | Galerie Knap, Amsterdam | 2007