



ALINE WITSCHI
ANGELOS MERGES

THE RADIANCE OF EARTHEN BONDS

This exhibition, which an installation by Aline Witschi and paintings by Angelos Merges form two halves of, constitutes a cataclysmic collision of comet and planet.

Aline's installation consists of what appear to be organisms or miniature habitats thereof, growing, as opposed to bursting into, flames, slabs of dreamlike landscape and chainmail set ablaze, all crafted from clay blackened through firing. Overwhelmingly earthen though the motives are and subterranean the material, the shapes they warp into and the constellations they form have something of the extraterrestrial about them. While the chainmail, a relief of a flail and an intricacy reminiscent of Gothic architecture invoke the middle ages, intentional references on the part of the artist are mainly made to the elements and to vegetation, which she has attained intimate knowledge of through farm work, to the celestial and to what unites them. Another set of interests, rather than being made explicit, is inherent in the processes through which the installation came about, namely the choice of material, an engagement with its mutability, which doubles as a practical meditation on time, and repetition. The installation harkens back to previous projects of Aline's, most prominently, in aspect and narratively, *Star Shooting*, a fantastical vision of the skeleton of a star. Having been moulded from the same material and into similar





shapes and taken on the same colour in the kiln, the present installation hangs on the wall like slivers of stellar bone hurled through the air upon impact with the earth. Dark and bold, had it broken off to the sound of music, it would have been to those slower passages found in death metal, in which a single aerial guitar track soars above chords grinding lowly. As for the celestial body in question, the eponymous character of George Gordon Byron's dramatic poem *Manfred* seems to have predicted its arrival: "(...) A star condemn'd,/The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,/A wandering hell in the eternal space;", with the spirits he communes with describing it in more detail: "A wandering mass of shapeless flame,/A pathless comet, and a curse,/The menace of the universe;/Still rolling on with innate force,/Without a sphere, without a course,/A bright deformity on high,/The monster of the upper sky!"

The earth, as depicted by Angelos Merges, this wandering hell crashes into is a place of disquiet. Painted in the centuries-old medium of oil, its screen-like luminescence, which the artist partly attributes to the digital nature of his sources, nevertheless identifies his creations as contemporary. What they recall specifically are those soft focus film sequences showcasing an amnesiac's returning recollections of the moments leading up to events so scarring, they voluntarily erased them from their memory. Figures often only

protrude partially from the edges, backgrounds are blurred and there are prominent omissions, including faces. When detail is defined, it is with a precision that suggests examination so intense as to lead to almost uncomfortable familiarity. The subject of the first of these paintings is the lower half of a kneeling figure, presumably a young boy. His forearms don't rest on his thighs, which his fingers also hover above, and his legs are at a slightly awkward angle, as if he was about to stand up. Where to go or whom to meet is uncertain.

The abeyance it is easy to feel the world of Angelos' paintings will forever be held in suggests that, here, too, Godot will never come. The figure lodged in dense foliage in the second painting shares the aforesaid one's youth and pink skin and is also clothed in nothing but blue trunks. Alice looking through the door to the garden springs to mind and seeing as the leaves merge to a solid wall towards the edges and the figure has somehow managed to bury both his head and arms in them, he appears to have already found Wonderland. The now adult figures in the third painting wander a sandy landscape similar to the one in the first. The palette, which is that of a boilingly hot summer's day or a fever dream, turns what would otherwise constitute mystery into inscrutability that mainly invites exploration as a way to resolve the unease it causes. Lone





exploration, since Angelos doesn't imbue his paintings with overt meaning, leaving room for interpretation instead. This doesn't, however, amount to secrecy about the conceptual aspect of his art. He is open about his preoccupation with the politics of his home country of Greece in particular and with some of the of less tangible facets of life, such as liminality, which he considers intrinsic to it. Under this aspect, happening upon a message over the course of one's exploration of Angelos' paintings might be to let them lead one astray. Or to have freed oneself from their spell.

Text, Myléne Seck





Aline Witschi is currently fascinated by the ecosystem of our planet, its landscapes and cycles. In clay, traces of the entire water cycle can be found; after all, it is essentially eroded earth from the planet we inhabit.

She has also begun to experiment more with floral, cosmic, and architectural elements, sometimes combining them all in one piece, as seen in works like "Star Shooting" or "Another Piece of Gaia." Seeing it as a reflection of how networks interconnect and how more and more nodes can be found, whether in the ecosystem and its cycles, in human patterns, or even the vast expanse of the cosmos.

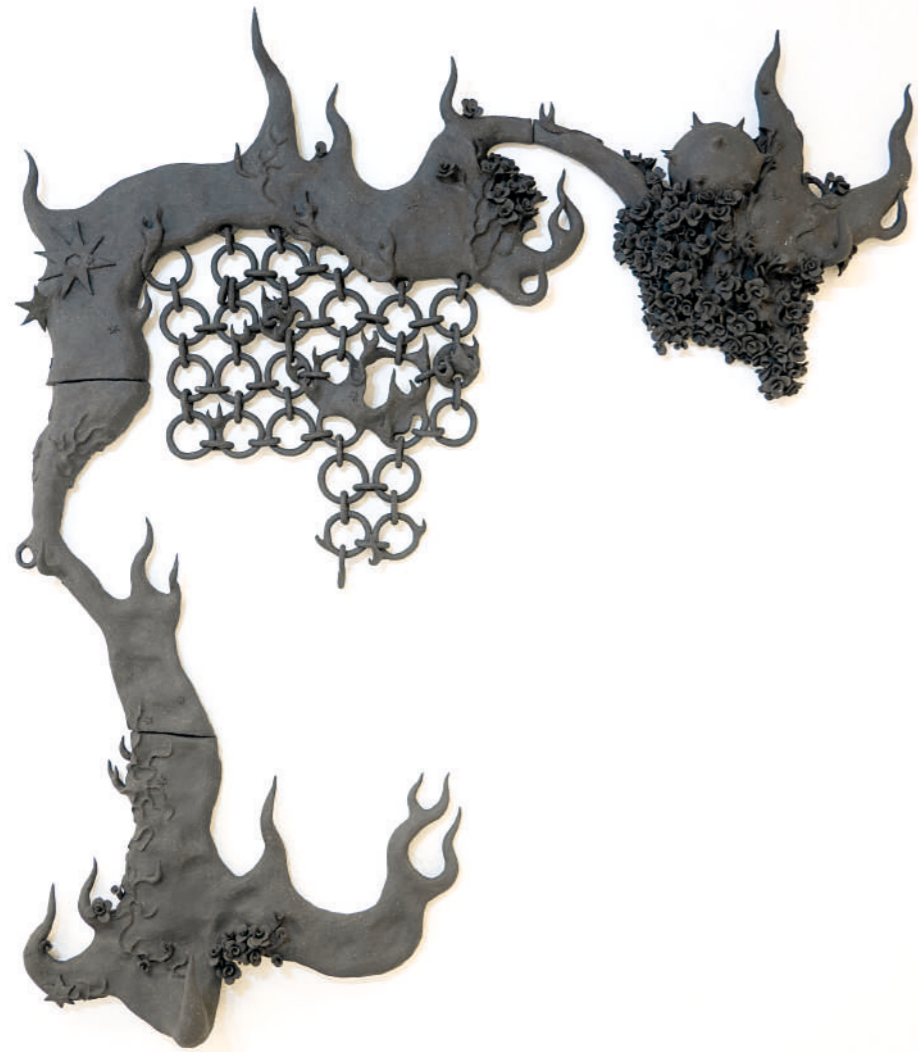
Aline Witschi, born 1995 in Biel (CH), lives and works in Biel and Büren a.A.. She completed her Master in Fine Arts at the ZHdK, Zurich (CH) in 2023. 2022 to 2023 she was part of the curation team of EGG-space in Toni Areal, Zurich. In 2020 she received the Women's Art Award Canton of Bern. She exhibited 2024 at the Kunststhalde Bern, 2024 at the Centre Pasquart in Biel, 2024 at the Kunstverein Augsburg (DE), 2023 at the Galerie Nina Mielcarczyk in Leipzig (DE), 2023 at the Galerie Mayhaus in Erlach (CH), 2023 at the Garage COOP in Strasbourg (FR) and 2023 at Toxi in Zurich.



Sunset Snail, 2024

Burned clay

150 x 70 x 10 cm



Glowing Sediments, 2023

Burned clay

38 x 27 x 3 cm



Bitter Sweet Branch, 2024

Burned clay

115 x 110 x 10 cm



To Crescent and Back.
2024 Burned clay
190 x 65 x 10 cm



Sunhillows. 2023
Burned clay
38 x 27 x 7 cm



Exponential Rise and

Fall, 2024

Burned clay

270 x 170 x 4 cm

clockwise II (left), 2022

Oil on canvas

46 x 33 cm

clockwise II (right), 2022

Oil on canvas

46 x 33 cm

Semi-orbit, 2024

Oil on canvas

30 x 40 cm

Intermediate Wing, 2024

Burned clay

Size variable



Angelos Merges' recent work explores the theme of liminality, capturing the subtle moments of change and the blurred boundaries of human experience. His paintings depict a constant exchange between the exposed and the unseen, raising questions about perspective and power.

These scenes, reminiscent of mobile snapshots or video frames, use a highly saturated palette that echoes the vividness of digital screens. By blending traditional painting techniques with contemporary aesthetics, Merges invites viewers to rethink familiar narratives and the immediacy of modern visual culture.

Angelos Merges is a Swiss-Greek visual artist. He was born in 1989 in Chios, Greece. He received an Integrated Master from Athens School of Fine Arts in the direction of Painting in 2020 and a Master in Fine Arts from Zürcher Hochschule der Künste in 2023. He lives and works in Zürich, Switzerland.

Immersion emersion, 2023

Oil on canvas

80 x 120 cm





Happy spring equinox, 2024

Oil on canvas

34 x 46 cm

Semi-orbit, 2024

Oil on canvas

30 x 40 cm





Slipper 2, 2023

Oil on canvas

27 x 35 cm

Gallica trees, 2024

Oil on canvas

180 x 150 cm





The FOMO Art Space curatorial approach is based on the belief that contemporary art can serve not only as a visual experience, but also as a catalyst for social interaction and community movement. FOMO is designed as a lively, interactive space in which art cannot only be viewed, but actively experienced. We invite the audience to question traditional art concepts through active participation.

Our exhibitions function as an experimental field in which the barriers between artists, artworks and viewers dissolve. A dynamic, relational space is created that sees art as a way of opening up possibilities in exchange and in shaping communities.

The annual program is characterized by four focus exhibitions, each of which has a specific subject. Between these highlights, solo and double exhibitions ensure continued diversity and dynamics.





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