

**LEANDRA AGAZZI** 03.02.23 - 12.02.23

## CRITTERS LURKING

**Contribution to Buildings and Ruins by Nico Sebastian Meyer**

Our ancestors saw ghosts everywhere. They filled the trees around them and the sky with personality and agency to explain things they did not understand. In today's materialized, twenty-first century civilized culture, we have removed contact with ghosts from our lives and seek to locate consciousness through technological tools.

The way into Leandra Agazzi's exhibition is blocked. A large living sculpture stands in the way. The thick trunk, full of character, is formed only by the annual cutting in winter. The tree looks headless, and it was often said to have magical and dark powers. In case of illness, recovery was promised by tying three knots to the branches and whispering one's wish softly to the trunk. If one stayed too long at night near such a trunk, it was considered suspicious. The most gruesome stories of ghosts and goblins were invented, as well as of witches who danced under willows.

From all the walls, 70 different eyes peer into the exhibition space. The eyes of the critters glow, blink, and move their differently shaped pupils. Donna Haraway uses the term "critter" in her book *Staying With the Trouble* as a word for microbes, plants, animals, humans and nonhumans, and sometimes even to machines. This means that human beings are no longer the only decisive actors. It is more a «becoming-with» with other species. The goal, then, is the flourishing of all critters and the realization that humans are only one of many viable potentials for sensory experiences such as perception and touch.

In the center of the room, an invasive growing bush stretches across the floor. Upon closer inspection, one sees how the fine branches are deliberately soaked in water to form roots within. New green leaves are already sprouting at the tips of the branches. The branches are ideal for braiding and as a fuel and building material, rapidly renewable, cheap, versatile. The willow tree provides an ideal habitat for many insects, mammals, birds, as well as fungi and other rare plants. Care and cultivation of willows helps to maintain an ecosystem.

For this exhibition, the Italian-Swiss artist has created a spatial imagination that oscillates in materialities and motifs equally between nature, mythology and technology. A resonant space opens up that deals with themes of collective intelligence and gives rise to a polyphony of actors.

Leandra Agazzi (\*1994) is an interdisciplinary artist based in Zurich. She is currently pursuing a MA in Fine Arts at the Zurich University of the Arts. In her installation and sculptural works, she combines manual techniques and natural materials, which have their own history, with digital, contemporary themes. A playful dialogue between organic and technical processes rubs shoulders in the works. The installation *Care Less*, 2021 was winning the 1st place of the Ivan Ladislav Galeta Award, at the 4th International Student Biennial, 2021, MKC Gallery in Split, Croatia. She is the founder and manager of the Offspace Flüelastrasse in Zurich. die Meyer hier als skulpturale Setzungen appropriiert. Vermittelt durch den „todbringenden“ Schnitt kommt dem Schilf als Skulptur ein „neues Leben“ mit neuen Bedeutungen zu.

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**Critters Lurking**

2023

Installation

Willow trunk, willow branches, water, video projection

10x9x4m

**A Plant is Growing**

2023

Performance

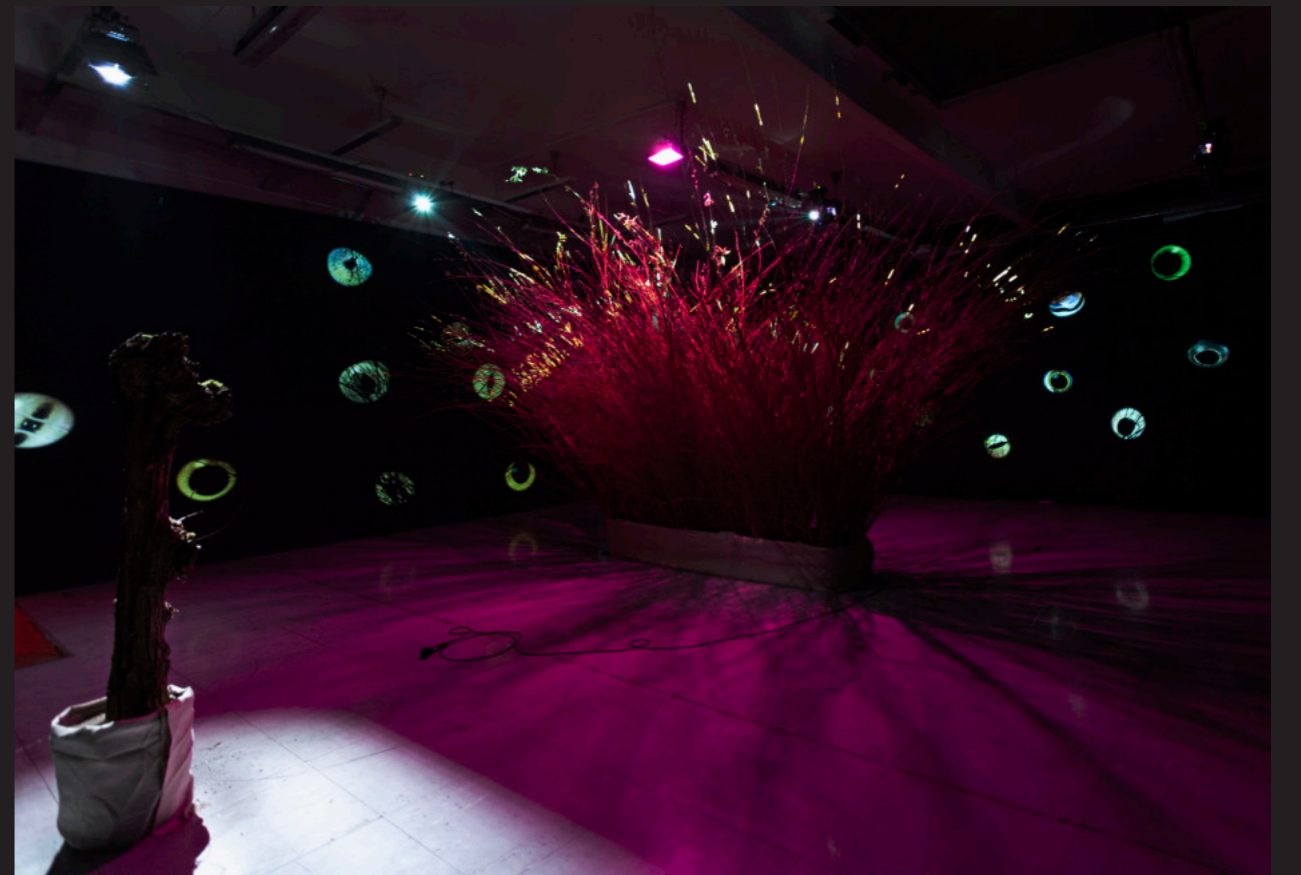
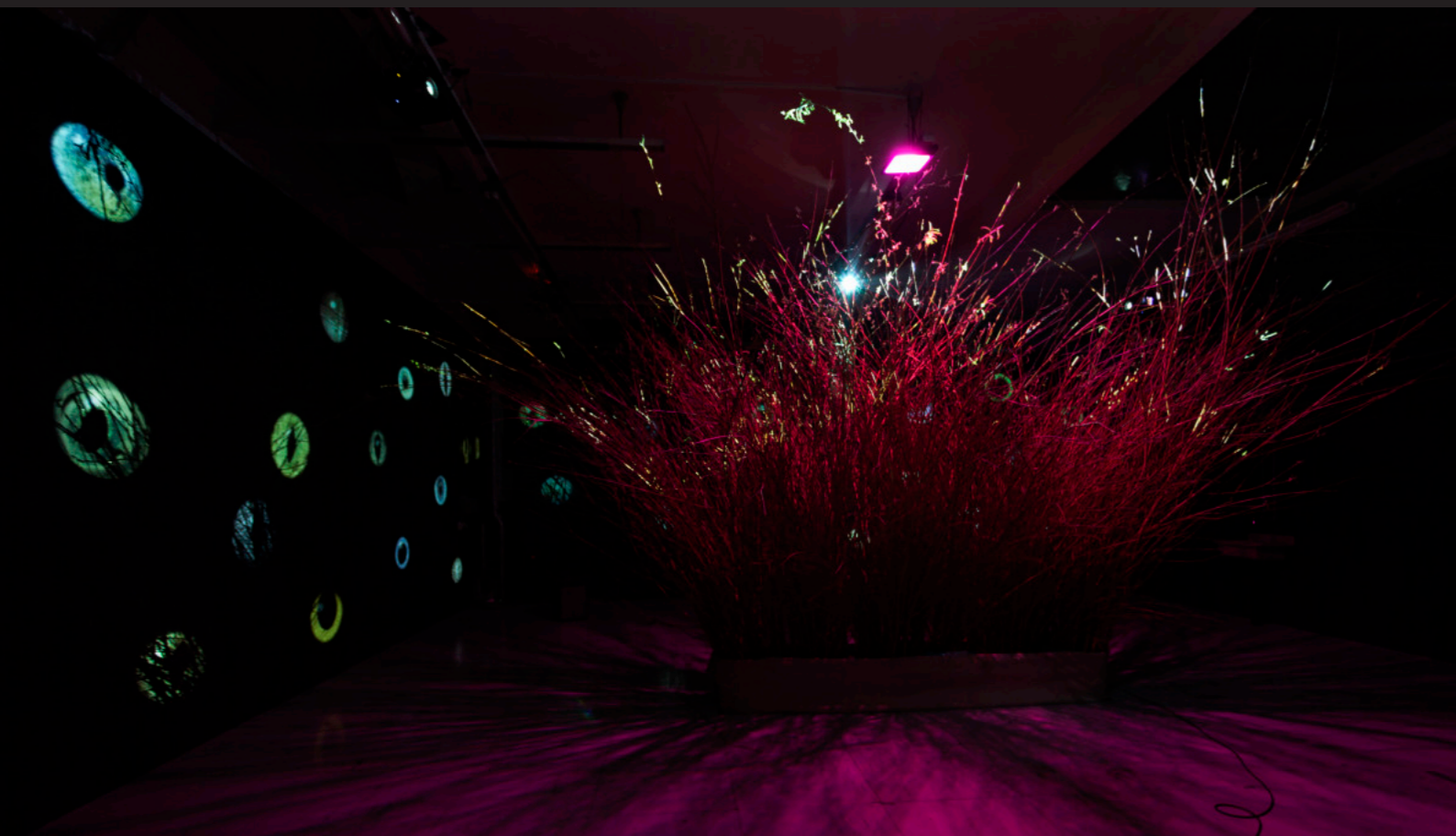
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