

GROUND CONTROL

ANDREA ACOSTA | LARISSA FASSLER | MILA PANIC | NINA WIESNAGROTZKI

OPENING | **FRIDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 6 – 9 PM**

BERLIN | 10785 POTSDAMER STRASSE 81B

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We cordially invite you to the opening of »Ground Control« curated by Anaïs Castro and Verity Seward.

The neoliberal economic model that prevails across the world is at war with planetary boundaries. The irreparable impact of mass-agriculture, urbanism and resource extraction becomes increasingly evident and translates into the heightened frequency of natural disasters. Across the world, the scientific community's message is clear and a feeling of precariousness - a lack of control - is beginning to seep into the human psyche. »Ground Control« explores the tensions between organic and human impulses and whether they can be successfully reconciled. Bringing together the work of four Berlin-based artists, the exhibition yields an urgent reconsideration of our relationship to nature and space, eliciting new ways of inhabiting our environments that are in harmony with the complex dynamics that regulate the natural order.

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Andrea Acosta and Larissa Fassler tap into humanity's inclination for classifying and organizing space as a means to rationalize the biosphere. In *Mecanismo para volver a levantar un árbol (Mechanism for lifting a tree again)* (2019) Acosta assembles a tree from a collection of organic fragments amassed over several years. Oscillating between the macro and micro, each fragile piece is delicately mapped into a grid formation to construct an ethereal constellation of constituent parts. In *Rehearsal for Transforming Landscapes* (2019), Acosta explores the mining industry and its impact on the landscape. The mapping of human activity over a given territory is also the subject that motivates the production of Larissa Fassler in two bodies of work presented in this exhibition that address the tremendous changes that occurred in Berlin over the past three decades. In *Schlossplatz I, II, V* (2014) Fassler charts the light levels, footstep measurements, and angles of tourist photos of a central Berlin site. Her alternative topographies focus on the symbiotic relationship between people and space, as built environments are animated and defined by human interactions.

If urbanism and architecture constitute the most obvious examples of spatial governance in today's culture, agriculture is certainly one of the most long-standing cases. Mila Panic's video *Burning Field* (2017) depicts the intentional burning of her family's field in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The annual process of clearing the weeds and fertilizing the land is documented in anxiety-inducing real time. The fire, which initially seems to be a violent and destructive power, is in fact the gesture of careful management, woven into the artist's sense of identity, responsibility, and lineage in relation to the land - her future inheritance. Whilst being a controlled event, Mila Panic's video and series of photographs recall the tens of thousands of wildfires scorching the earth every year, a number expected to grow exponentially in decades to come.

Nina Wiesnagrotzki's *Chinese Seismic Investigations* (2016 – 2019) was conceptualised in response to the natural catastrophes, which are beyond human control. The series was triggered by the artist's observations of the architecture of Chinese megacities and her research into the first instrument used to predict earthquakes built in 132 BC. Wiesnagrotzki's *Dragons* and *Toads* reinterpret this ancient seismoscope. Surrounding these structures, a range of laser-engraved spheres depict comets drawn by Chinese astronomers, and anecdotes about contemporary occurrences of sinkholes, fault lines, and seismic events.

As a means to rationalize their devastation, natural catastrophes have historically been interpreted as the expression of a supernatural power, entwined with mythology or a willing belief in a deity's vengeance. Just like the ancient instrument, Wiesnagrotzki's dysfunctional constructions find their purpose in an expression of environmental unity and cosmological interconnectedness. In this anthropocentric epoch, however, we are increasingly aware of our own impact and influence over the fragile ecosystem that regulates the planet. We have come to realize that there isn't a superpower to save us from the environmental catastrophe? On the horizon, it is up to us, humans, to channel creativity and inventiveness in engineering a sustainable management of space and resources.

Text by Anaïs Castro and Verity Seward

ANDREA ACOSTA | CV

1981 born in Bogota, Colombia
2008 MFA Public Art and New Artistic Strategies, Bauhaus University, Weimar
2005 BA Fine Arts: with emphasis on Electronic Media and Time based Arts, Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia

Andrea Acosta Fonrodona lives and works in Berlin.

LARISSA FASSLER | CV

1975 born in Vancouver, Canada
1996 Studio Arts Diploma, Capilano College, Vancouver, Canada
1999 BFA with emphasis in Sculpture, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada
2003 MFA Goldsmiths' College, University of London, London, UK

Larissa Fassler lives and works in Berlin.

MILA PANIC | CV

1991 born in Bosnia & Herzegovina
2013 International Summer School Salzburg, class of Tania Buguera 'Arte Util', Austria
2010-2014 Academy of Arts, department of visual art, University of Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina
2015-2017 MFA Art in Public Space and New Artistic Strategies, Bauhaus-University, Weimar

Mila Panic lives and works in Berlin.

NINA WIESNAGROTZKI | CV

 born in Memmingen / Allgäu
2003 - 2010 Medical studies in Munich, Strasbourg (F), Hamburg (state examination)
2007 - 2014 Fine Arts studies at the Academy of Fine Arts Hamburg (HfbK, diploma)

Nina Wiesnagrotzki lives and works in Berlin.