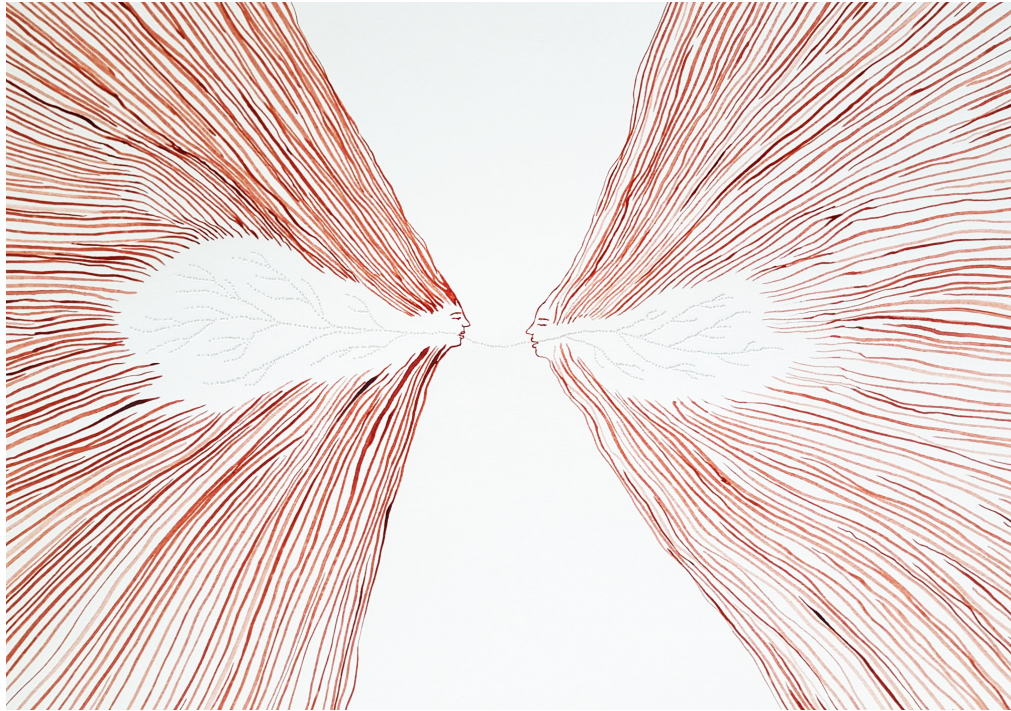


Marie-claire Messouma Manlanbien, Odonchimeg Davaadorj,  
Nona Inescu & Clarinde Wesselink



*Odonchimeg Davaadorj, Inner roots 1, 2020, Chinese ink and perforations on paper, 50x65cm, courtesy backlash*

AKINCI is proud to present for the first time in the Netherlands works by Marie-claire Messouma Manlanbien, Odonchimeg Davaadorj and Nona Inescu. In the attachment space we are excited to present the film *The Brook*, a new project by Clarinde Wesselink.

In this exhibition with the title *rooted* we bring together works that explore connections between the female body, being embedded in nature, in cultural heritage and the art of storytelling.

Marie-claire Messouma Manlanbien from Guadeloupe and Ivory Coast lives in Paris since 2004 when she escaped from war torn Ivory Coast. Manlanbien defines herself as a 'storyteller with mediums' as she works with textile, drawing, sculpture, photography, video and installation. In her works Manlanbien brings together different cultures while merging traditional handicraft with urban industrial processes. Within her installations Manlanbien tends to create activated spaces fusing a variety of mediums, techniques and materials as a form of a continuous research to understand according to her words 'creolization and cultural synthesis'. Elaborate textile works are becoming complex maps of plural identities and diverse ecosystems where different stories meet and form new ones. Ephemeral poetic narrations appear in Manlanbien's delicate works on textile and paper but often with distinct references to intersectionality. Her works compose new topographies around the themes of femininity.

Odonchimeg Davaadorj is an artist based in Paris, originally from Mongolia. In her installations with mainly works on paper and textile Davaadorj incorporates the notions of ecology, environment, nature and living beings. Creatures that are half-man half-bird – heads of sleeping people, with plants sprouting from their eyes and mouths – houses growing roots: in Odonchimeg Davaadorj's artistic world, there are no boundaries between humans, plants and animals. Everything is interconnected, symbioses take shape or give rise to new organisms that defy all manner of classification.

As in the work of Marie-claire Messouma Manlanbien the feminine body, nature, cultural heritage and trying to reach the other by telling universal stories play a role. The medium Davaadorj uses is mainly watercolour and ink on paper, however she easily transports her figures that mutate from one shape to another to the medium of textile, ceramics or installation. 'The main thing I try to evoke through my art

is the links: links between humans, between humans and nature, between nature and animals etc. We essentially depend on each other and each living being is part of this ecosystem. However, those links are fragile, just like the red threads that I use to connect different living beings in my drawings.'

Nona Inescu lives and works between Berlin, Germany, and Bucharest, Romania. Inescu's artistic practice is interdisciplinary and includes photography, installation, sculptures, and video works. Based on a theoretical and literary perspective, the works focus on the relationship between the human body and the environment and the redefinition of this subject in a post-human key. Concepts of geological time and our intense interrelation with our surroundings compose an aesthetic of a primal contemporary togetherness in an organic and biological techno-sphere.

"In my work, I am interested in the overlapping of human and non-human bodies and processes." Inescu is fascinated by stones and corals, as their development and growth have such a different time-frame than human bodies. Especially interesting is the fact that the human body shares the molecular structure of corals. This, according to Inescu is a common link between these animals and human beings. "Corals are dying, because of the human impact upon the planet, while humans find ways of integrating coral skeletons in their bodies, via implants or coral calcium supplements." Recently the hand motif became a necessary and active part of the artist's body of photographic work. Contrary to the work of Marie-claire Messouma Manlanbien and Odonchimeg Davaadorj, Nona Inescu does not express her ideas by using her hands to produce drawings or hand-made items. Instead, hands function as a marker for human scale and presence; but also as an identification tool; as a map for the future, as well as looking at it from an evolutionary point of view.

Clarinde Wesselink is a Dutch movement artist. Concepts of emptying, forgetting, and 'inter-being' are reflected in her somatic performances and choreographies. After graduating from the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam, she developed her own movement methodology. Wesselink's work explores the possibility of creating choreographies in co-creation with various living beings, such as lizards, bees, and beetles that navigate in the dark using the position of the stars. She seeks to understand what a movement language between us and other entities would look like. As she follows the rhythms and movements of non-human entities, her work becomes intertwined with the choreographies of the earth.

At first sight, the work of Clarinde Wesselink opens up dreamlike worlds, set aside the temporalities, politics and constraints of everyday life and space. Worlds, that permit those who enter them even feelings, sensations and thoughts beyond the human realm. The self is no longer a singular self, persisting in time and space, but a self that differs from, and multiplies itself with each behavioural repetition and each new encounter.

In the photographic works *The Garden* athletes are no longer in control over their bodies and environment, but have become parts in a choreography, along with the water and the soil. In the film *The Brook* the human body is no longer a 'self' but has lost their social determinations by entering the seemingly untimely time of the stone. And in the work *Rust* nature is no longer an inert ground, but an ongoing transformative force.

However, once you spend a bit longer with Wesselink's worlds, it becomes clear their impact or meaning goes beyond that of being merely momentary escapes from human-centeredness. To be more precise, Wesselink's worlds confront us with a series of paradoxes, of which it could be said that they are at the heart of the challenges our societies face with regard to inner and outer nature.

The worlds of *The Brook*, *Rust* and *The Garden* do not simply invite 'us' in, as passive spectators, but challenge the limits and possibilities of what an 'us' as humans might entail and where this 'us' might end up, particularly in the face of the looming ecological catastrophe.

## Biographies

*Marie-Claire Messouma Manlanbien was born in 1990 in Paris, where she now also lives and works. She studied at École nationale supérieure d'art, Paris-Cergy between 2011 and 2016 after graduating as a graphic designer in 2010 and was an artist in residence at Cité des arts, Paris and Cécile Fakhoury, Abidjan, Ivory Coast. She has had solo exhibitions at the French Institute, Berlin (2022); Orangerie du Senat, Paris (2021); Primo Marella Gallery, Milan (2019); 50GOLBORNE Gallery, London (2019). She has recently exhibited collectively at MAMAC, Nice (2023); Musée Cères Franco, Montolieu (2022); Royal Academy of Art, London (2021); Céline Fakhoury, Abidjan (2021); Somerset House, London (2020); Sargent's Daughters Gallery, NYC (2020); MO.CA, Brescia (2019); 38th EVA International, Limerick (2018).*

*Odonchimeg Devaadorj was born in 1990 in Mongolia and now lives and works in Paris. She studied at École nationale supérieure d'art, Paris-Cergy between 2014 and 2016 and graduated from Bohemia Institute, Czechoslovakia in 2009. Solo exhibitions in 2023 are at Museum Folkwang, Essen and at Backs\ash gallery, Paris. She recently partook in the group exhibitions at MAMAC, Nice (2023); Maison Caillebotte, Yerres (2023); l'Été des Serpents, Arles (2022); Domaine départemental de Chamarande (2022); Âme Nue, Hamburg (2021); L'Espace de Christian Brest, Paris (2021); Centre d'art Transpalette, Bourges (2021); CAC, Meymac (2019).*

*Nona Inascu was born in 1990, lives and works between Berlin, Germany, and Bucharest, Romania. She completed her studies in the summer of 2016 at the National University of Arts in Bucharest (Photography and Video Department) after graduating from the Chelsea College of Art & Design in London in 2010 and the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp in 2011. She has had solo exhibitions at CAP Centre d'art, Saint-Fons (2023); SpazioA, Pistoia (2021); Künstlerhaus Bremen (2019). Recent group exhibitions have taken place at Kunstraum Niederoesterreich, Vienna (2023); MAMAC, Nice (2023); Kunstraum Kreuzberg, Berlin (2022); basis, Frankfurt (2022); Museo della Montagna, Torino (2022); Centre Clark, Montreal (2021); Art Encounters Biennale, Timișoara (2021); Peles Empire, Berlin (2020); Tallinn Art Hall, Estonia (2020).*

*Clarinde Wesselink was born 1991 in Gorssel, NL, graduated at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam (2010-2014), and was introduced to the improvisational dance scene in Berlin. Also, she practiced in Butoh a collection of different Japanese dance and martial art forms. Recent shows and performances took place at RAUM Utrecht (2018); Nieuw Dakota, Amsterdam (2018); SIGN, Groningen (2019); Knockvologan-Studies, Isle of Mull, Scotland (2019); Kunstkapel Amsterdam (2021); Dat Bolwerck Zutphen, NL (2022), a.o.m.*