

# HIAP

Suomenlinna  
Sveaborg  
Kaapeli  
Cable Factory

Press release

## FRONTIERS IN RETREAT 2017–2018: Ecological experimentality in art – an international exhibition series and a publication

16.2.2017



Elena Mazzi (in collaboration with Sara Tirelli): A fragmented world, three channel video installation, 2016

### Art and research at the dawn of a post-fossil paradigm

During 2017–2018, the five-year international co-operative project *Frontiers in Retreat*, co-ordinated by Helsinki International Artist Programme (HIAP), one of the largest art residency centres in Northern Europe, will gather together various research and artistic processes realised around Europe during the project.

*Frontiers in Retreat* (2013–2018) has acted as a base for multidisciplinary forms of thought, research, and production, in which artists, researchers, and specialists from various fields track the elements of a 'post-fossil' paradigm to come, after the current, oil-based society. What forms of knowledge, discourse, and models of action would construct a viable future – for humans as well as other forms of life? What kinds of boundaries should we dismantle, so that change in the direction of an ecologically sustainable future would be possible?

In the *Frontiers* project, these questions have been examined, for example, in the *Museum of Nonhumanity* project (2016) of **Terike Haapoja** and **Laura Gustafsson**. The temporary museum dealt with the boundaries upheld between humans and animals, and the effects of this othering, both historically and in our time. The project, realised last September in Suvilahti and co-produced by *Frontiers in Retreat*, has recently been chosen as part of the programme for the Momentum Biennale that opens in Norway, in June.

Frontiers in Retreat, realised with the support of the EU's Culture Programme, will finish with *Edge Effects*, a series of eight satellite exhibitions, organised during 2017–2018. The exhibitions will gather together the works and research processes of 25 artists participating in the project, and place them in the context of the wider discourse within the arts on climate and paradigm changes and a post-fossil future. In addition to the exhibition series beginning in June 2017, the concluding projects of the Frontiers project include, for example, the publication *The Midden – Critical Dictionary of Ecology*, edited by curator **Jenni Nurmenniemi** and artist, curator, and author **Tracey Warr**.

### Exhibition series: Edge Effects

*Edge Effects* showcases a broad range of approaches to ecology in contemporary art. The exhibitions will consist of the manifoldness of points of view and geographical differences that has developed and influenced the work of artists in the seven partner residences of the project, during the last four years. The *Edge Effects* satellite exhibitions have a wide geographical span, reaching three continents via remote ecological frontiers typical of the project, edging towards urban environments. Each of the project's partners, Mustarinda (Finland), Scottish Sculpture Workshop SSW (Scotland), Cultural Front GRAD (Serbia), Skaffell – Centre for Visual Art (Iceland), Interdisciplinary Art Group SERDE (Latvia), and Centre d'Art i Natura CAN (Spain), curates and produces the content for its own *Edge Effects* exhibition. Behind the concept of the exhibition series are curators Jenni Nurmenniemi (HIAP, Frontiers in Retreat) and **Taru Elfving**. HIAP acts as a co-producer of the exhibitions.

Towards the end of the exhibition period, in autumn 2017 and early spring 2018, the HIAP *Edge Effects* satellites curated by Jenni Nurmenniemi will spread across the borders of Europe and into Seoul and New York. The two previous HIAP's Frontiers exhibitions, *Dissolving Frontiers* and *Excavations*, were organised in HIAP Galleria Augusta, in Helsinki, during 2014 and 2015.

The name of the *Edge Effects* exhibition series depicts the way the greatest diversity of life forms exists at the frontiers of different systems, such as ecosystems. The borders are not distinct dividing lines; instead, they are zones of contact, where different things and meanings mix. Of the numerous themes of the exhibitions, encountering the non-human and empathy, different cosmologies and views of nature, as well as the mutual interdependencies influencing the environment, arise as central. These are addressed with diverse artistic methods, from different cultural backgrounds and philosophical starting points.

*The more precise times and selection of artists will be published during spring and summer 2017.*

### Frontiers in Retreat Publication: The Midden – Critical Dictionary of Ecology

Instead of a traditional exhibition catalogue, the Frontiers collection to be published in April 2018 is an independent piece that heaps together material and information, the way composts do. The aim of the book is to distil and bring forth a voice that is distinct from the rapidly growing literature on ecology. The book will be a collection of fact and fiction, as well as a 39-word "critical dictionary" of the terms that have been essential to the research and artistic work of the Frontiers artists. The writers include curator and writer Taru Elfving, philosopher and writer **Antti Salminen**, and professor **Jussi Parikka**. The latter two are working in the HIAP writer-in-residence in Suomenlinna, in July 2017.

### Frontiers residencies in HIAP 2017

Alongside extensive international projects, Frontiers artists will continue working in the network's residences during the last years of the project. In 2017, HIAP offers residencies at the Suomenlinna studios to artists **Janne Nabb & Maria Teeri** (March–April), **Hanna Husberg** (June), Tracey Warr (June–July) and **Anna Rubio** (June–July). During their residencies, Warr and Rubio will carry out public art projects on the island, for instance in the form of audio, dance, and performance art. The recipient of The Artists' Association of Finland Artist's Prize 2016, Doctor of Fine Arts **Tuula Närhinen**, will, in turn, continue her photographic piece *Local* in Skaffell, in Iceland, in April.

## Jutempus: Zooetics 2017–2018

In 2017, Zooetics will take part in the Folkestone Triennale, which will take place from 2 September – 5 November in Folkestone, in Kent (UK). Zooetics is a 5-year interdisciplinary research project on environmental fictions and models of the future, a part of the Outreach and Education programme of the Frontiers project. The project is organised by artist and professor **Gediminas Urbonas**, artist **Nomeda Urbonas**, Tracey Warr, and curator and researcher **Viktorija Siaulyte**, who form a part of the project partner Jutempus Interdisciplinary Art Programme. The latest Zooetics symposium and workshop *Future Fictions Summit* was organised in an erstwhile NATO base in Ásbrú and in the Reykjavik Art Museum in Iceland, in autumn 2016. The first documentation of the Symposium, **Jennifer Gabrys'** lecture, can now be viewed on the Zooetics vimeo.

In February 2018, Zooetics will arrange a symposium at MIT, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in Cambridge, USA. A more detailed programme will be announced during 2017.

## FRONTIERS IN RETREAT

- A five-year EU project (2013–2018) co-ordinated by HIAP – Helsinki International Artist Programme
- Art and ecology in residences at the edges of ecological frontiers
- Working group: curator Jenni Nurmenniemi (2014–2018), producer Jaana Eskola (2015–), and project and communications assistant Salla Lahtinen (2016–)
- Concept: curator Taru Elfving, in dialogue with Irmeli Kokko, Jenni Nurmenniemi and Jaakko Rustanius (2012)
- **Project partners:** Mustarinda, Scottish Sculpture Workshop SSW, Cultural Front GRAD, Centre d'Art i Natura CAN, Skaffell, and Interdisciplinary Art Group SERDE, Jutempus Interdisciplinary Art Program (Zooetics)
- **Artists:** Bartaku, Quelic Berga, Brett Bloom, Sylvia Grace Borda, Company, Gints Gabrans, Fernando Garcia-Dory, Kati Gausmann, Carl Giffney, Tue Greenfort, Terike Haapoja, Hanna Husberg, Radhildur Ingadottir, Saara-Maria Kariranta, Mari Keski-Korsu, Elena Mazzi, Janne Nabb & Maria Teeri, Mirko Nikolić, Tuula Närhinen, Khaled Ramadan, Anna Rubio, Joanes Simon-Perret, Richard Skelton, Tracey Warr, Simon Yuill
- The Frontiers in Retreat project has been funded by the EU's Culture Programme, Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, Kone Foundation, and Alfred Kordelin Foundation

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## IMAGES FOR PRESS

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## LINKS

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