

*Del cuerpo el rastro permanece.
Of the body the trace remains.*

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Of the body the trace remains

“No entiendo los amores
del alma sola,
cuando el cuerpo es un río
de bellas olas.
De bellas olas, sí,
que le dan vida;
si falta un elemento,
negra es la herida.”

Parra, Violeta. De cuerpo entero.



Abstract.

Territory, identity, and the intricate interaction between the body and the landscape are the most relevant concepts surrounding my artistic research. I'm curious about the body's malleability and its capacity to transform through interactions with other bodies, spaces, and time. Questions of boundaries and the body's ambiguous limits arise, influenced by personal experiences of migration.

Where does my body start and where does it end?

I begin by grounding myself in the physicality of my own being, embodying a Latin American woman with Spanish roots. The exploration extends to collective bodies that transit geographical boundaries, reflecting on familial histories of migration. I wonder if their bodies are still present in the spaces where they passed through or if these spaces give us some knowledge of its fragments.

I'm inspired by nature and its materials and textures, and I'm particularly intrigued by the connection between the body and water, resonating with the ideas of posthuman feminist phenomenology. Nature, sound, silence, and material states serve as ongoing inspirations for my work.



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Introduction.

This text encapsulates my thoughts, explorations, and experiences cultivated throughout my two-year master's journey at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts. Serving as a valuable guide, it chronicles my activities, their outcomes, and reflections.

My grandparents were born in Spain and migrated to Chile a long time ago due to political confrontations. Boats of military origin served as a moving home for them as they immersed in an almost month-long journey through the Atlantic Ocean. The diaspora involved, among many other things, drifting along the water from one continent to another, navigating currents and feeling the movement of the waves on their bodies on a daily basis through traces of past memories.

From these family stories of forced migration due to political, economic, social, ideological and military confrontations, questions arise about the body and the territory, which lead me in their confluence to the water and its fluidity. The wateriness of our bodies, the wateriness that connects territories, the wateriness that contains memory.

The juxtaposition of these ideas are the ones that surround my artistic practice, where the contact with my current environment and the exploration from the material have been a fundamental element of this period.

These thoughts and sensations have been a centre point to my master's project and its material and theoretical development. From the emotionality that affects me as a migrant in Norway, from the family memories of the diaspora from Spain the questions around the body and the territory rise to the surface and in a fluid way everything fills up with water.



Chapter 1: Feeling the materials.

My tendency to overanalyse every situation before taking action extends into my work. This habit of contemplating and reevaluating ideas before engaging with the material is deeply ingrained and I've discovered a harmonious equilibrium between this cerebral approach and the material-oriented phase. Both states, rooted in bodily experiences that significantly shape my artistic practice.

In my opinion its crucial for us in the crafts to be engaged by these perspectives since they are constantly taking part of our practices in the embodying of them. This might be mainly by the fact that our own body becomes part of our practices at every stage of the creative development. We materialize and idea given by our situational and relational existence, a thought, a felling, a bodily affection in the most sensitive and intuitive way. As Rick Dolphijn states referring to Spinoza's thinking: "*the body and the mind, but also the subject and the object, the inside and the outside, are consequential to each other*"¹

During all of my artistic path, I've been really intrigued by these thoughts since my own practice investigations starts from the body itself and its connection with the territory and our surroundings. In relation to these ideas, I find myself in harmony with the work of Baruch Spinoza in opposition to the Cartesian mind-body dualism, where the external world exists only in how it affects the body, while the body exists only in how it is affected by the external world.

As a material-based artist, I have been experimenting with different materials to connect them with the ideas I'm interested in, investigating how to communicate them in a better way, both in the process or medium and in the material itself. I immerse myself in an intense material exploration which allowed me to recognize a working form that would be coherent with the narrative of my project.

A significant aspect of my creative process and major inspiration stems from immersing myself in the outdoors, observing and becoming an integral part of the environment. I employ photography and video as means of encapsulating these experiences. Over the years, water has consistently played a central role in both my artistic practice and contemplation, resulting in an extensive collection capturing the various waters that have surrounded me at different moments in time.

During these two years of developing my masters project I started working with materialities that surrounds us. Exploring the ways, they can make an impact / imprint in another material. I was interested in these materialities as a way to connect them with the traces that a body leaves, traces that may not be visible or tactile.

1. Dolphijn, Rick. *The philosophy of matter the philosophy of matter: A meditation*. Bloomsberry Academics, 1-20, 2021.

Light as material.

I began my experimentation working with light as a material, employing photosensitive emulsions typically used in alternative photographic processes like cyanotypes. These emulsions react to light by changing color, in this case different tones of blue, or becoming visible in some way.

With this method I was trying to capture a moment in a specific site, by transferring the ephemeral quality of light onto a more permanent and tangible material choosing particular locations around Oslo. By doing so, the aim was to capture the unique qualities of light present in these environments at specific moments. This decision likely added another layer of context to the prints, as each location contributed with a unique characteristic.

The duration of exposure varied in every imprint, and in this way, I could capture different aspects of the changing light. This technique likely results in a range of visual effects, from subtle shifts in tone to dramatic contrasts.

On the other hand, instead of using conventional photographic paper I used textiles as the medium for capturing the light imprints. This choice was made to add a tactile dimension and volume to the prints afterwards.

After I expose the textile to the light, I washed it in the water nearby to end the chemical process. This was not only for a practical purpose but also to underscore the connection between the print and the site itself.



Exposing textile to sunlight at Sorenga Sjøbad and developing them in the water of the fjord. (December 2022)

Landscape and it's elements.

As I mentioned before, a crucial element of my creative approach and primary source of inspiration originates from fully engaging with outdoor landscapes. When I do this, I try to engage all my senses which allow me to be fully present in the landscape at that moment. This connection is further enriched by encounters with other artists, such as the Spanish artist Ricardo Calero, whose work shares a similar connection with the outdoor spaces.

On December of 2022 I had the chance to visit his exhibition “Natural exterior – Diálogos con la Natura” (Natural exterior - Dialogues with Nature) at CDAN, Huesca, Spain. Elements such as light, meteorological phenomena, the passage of time or destiny are essential elements for Calero’s works to “germinate” and he denominates them “natural exterior”.

Much of his practice and his poetics are condensed in his actions in and on the territory, specially chosen places that become part of his works and that filtered by the mind and hand of the author, manage to build a language that identifies him.

Calero’s work resonates with my own thoughts and methods of experimenting with Calero’s work, which also involves a search for capturing a trace from these spaces into another form, leaving behind fragments of the dialogue between the location and the material itself.



Pictures taken by myself at the exhibition “Natural exterior – Diálogos con la Natura”. Calero, Ricardo.

Gesture in a volume.

After this initial stage of experimentations, I felt I needed to take a step away from my previous main material which is metal, so after exploring with the photosensible I found myself drawn to delving into textiles as the main material. I chose to continue working with this material as I needed to connect with a soft and malleable material that I could manipulate solely with my hands.

Various techniques were employed to stiffen the textile and capture the shapes I formed. Manipulating the fabric by hand, I saturated it with liquid glue to solidify it into different gestures, trying to find out a way to leave a trace of my own body onto the material.

I continued working with this method of rigidizing the textiles into a fluid gesture, initially using liquid white glue and then using plaster, gradually expanding on the dimensions of each piece, each of them as an independent fragment.

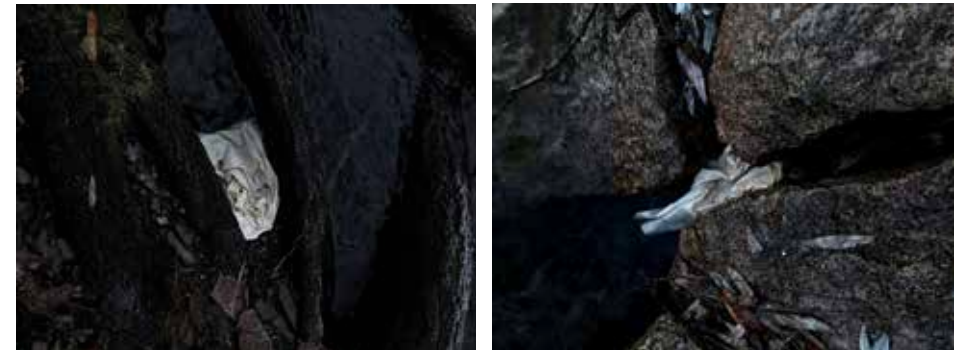


Textile forms/volumes rigidized by glue and plaster, modeled by hand.

Where the water starts and ends.

Here is where the qualities of the water made a connection with my way of thinking and treating the material. Water became an integral part of the creative process, not only participating in certain stages of experimentation but also serving as an aesthetic inspiration with its fluid characteristics directly manifesting in the pieces, the droplets, the fluidity, the organic curves and forms.

I began to think at the same time about what contains the water or what are its limits. Are they the shores where the waves are distorted when they collide? Are they the rocks or cliffs that contain a lake? Or are they those invisible and powerful limits that delimit territorial zones and their hegemony?



Textile shaped in between the rocks near to Aker Selva River.

Shape and traces.

From this juncture where the inherent qualities of water intertwined with my conceptual approach and treatment of the material, I started exploring with clay and textile. I dipped the textiles in liquid clay, shaped them with the gesture of my hands into wooden structures and fired them at 1249°. As a result, the textile disappears in the kiln as the material burns, leaving behind only faint traces and textures of its former presence.

This technique aimed to amplify the contrast between the organic fluidity of the body and the structure that certain limits such as territorial boundaries and the borders of our own body, appears to have. These boundaries, which may seem palpable, become practically invisible with the passage of time and the constant expansion of our bodies. Through this process, I tried to evoke the ephemeral nature of these boundaries and explore the interactions between presence and absence, form and texture.



Textile shaped by hand with liquid clay, inserting them in between a wooden structure. Results of the fired pieces.

On space and scale.

Following my experimentation with clay on a smaller scale, I realized my desire to work on a larger scale for the pieces intended for exhibition at our MA1 show in March 2023. To achieve this, I began by collecting cotton sheets, which I reused as the base material for my sculptures. Given the increased dimensions of the pieces, I opted to revert to using plaster to stiffen the material, as it offered a lighter alternative to clay and facilitated shaping the material according to my vision.

Settling into the plaster workshop, I embarked on the construction process. I cut the textiles into various dimensions, immersing them in liquid plaster and meticulously shaping the curves and forms by hand, strategically placing cushions and other soft volumes underneath each piece.



Production process at the plaster workshop.



Detail of the pieces.



Sculpture exhibited at MA1 show and KHiO Quarterly/Oslo Water world collaborative exhibition.

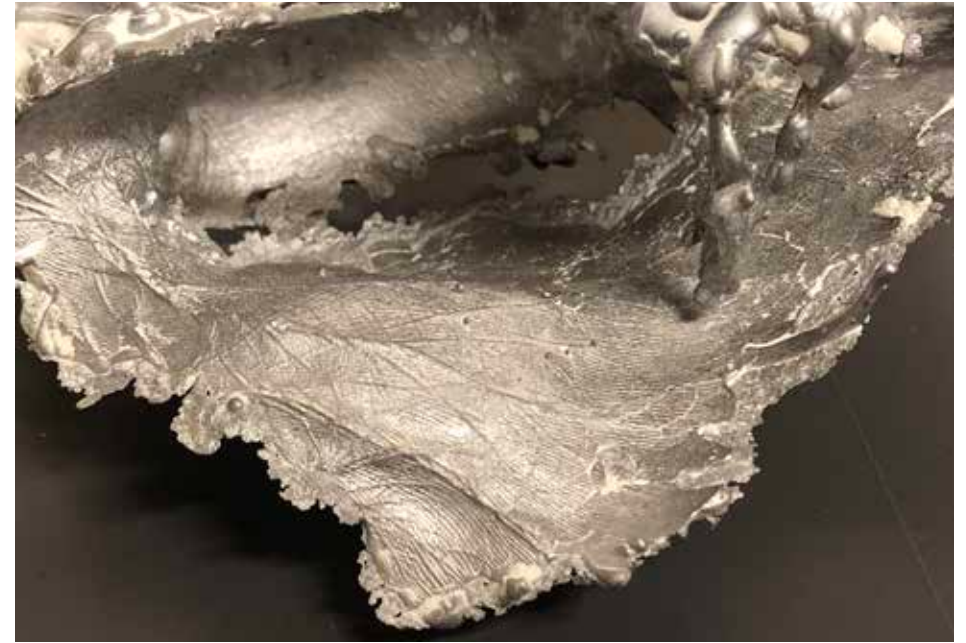
Wax in the water.

After some time of experimenting with plaster and ceramics I started working with wax modelled pieces, making imprints of the traces of my hands on the material and on the other hand, shaping the material through the water. With this technique the trace of the corporal gesture when I pour the melted wax in the water, is captured by the material at the moment of dropping. After this, I am using the technique called “lost wax”, where the wax is replaced by a metal, in this case, aluminum.

This approach where the form of the material is shaped by the water and the body gesture, in conjunction with the trace of something that once was there and then disappears, has caused a greater coherence in my work, both materially and technically. I felt that the experimentation stage led me to this last technic.



Process and results of shaping the melted wax in the cold water.



First pieces casted in aluminum using the investment technic.

The gesture in motion.

The idea of the gesture of the body embodied in the material evokes a strong connection to Richard Serra's artwork "*Gutter Corner Splash*" (1965-1995).

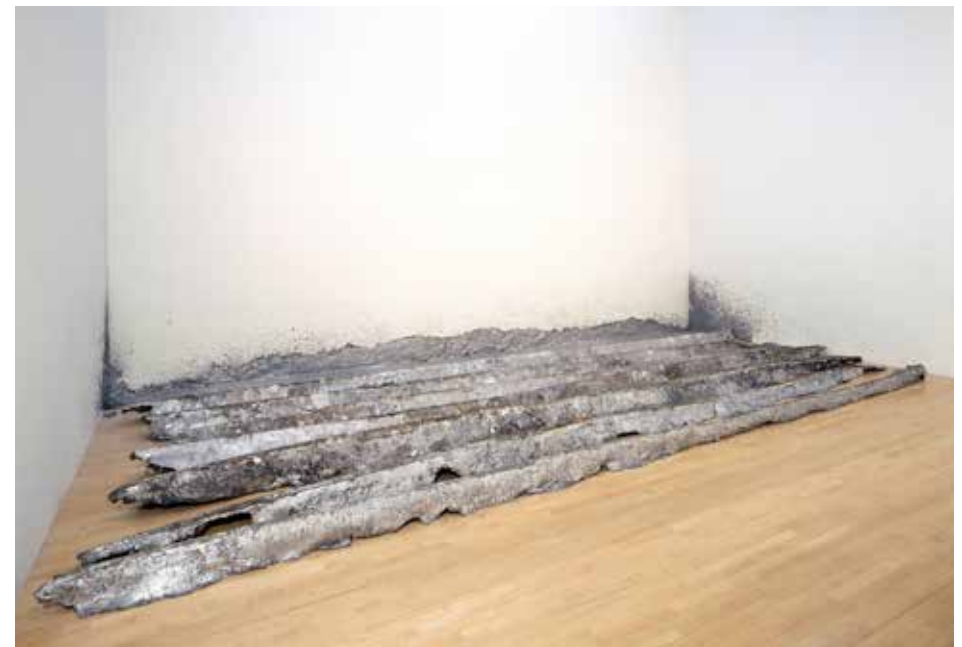
As I'm exploring in my own work, Serra's sculptures are an exploration of body gesture and action manifested through the manipulation of materials. In this piece, he employs molten lead, a material traditionally associated with heaviness and solidity, and transforms it through dynamic gestures into forms that defy gravity and express movement.

The title itself suggests a sense of energy and motion, evoking the image of splashing and fluidity. Serra's process of throwing molten lead into the intersection of a wall and floor captures a moment of intense physical action, where the artist's body becomes directly engaged in the creative process. This act of casting involves not only the physical act of throwing the lead but also the choreography required to control its flow and shape as it solidifies.

The resulting forms in the gallery, displayed with their corners facing upwards, reveal the traces of these gestural movements. The elongated, irregular shapes bear witness to the forceful impact of Serra's actions, capturing the energy and vitality inherent in the process of creation. Each form becomes a record of the artist's bodily gestures, frozen in time as a testament to the act of making.

Moreover, the placement of these forms in the gallery space invites viewers to engage with them physically, encouraging them to move around and explore the sculptures from different angles. In doing so, viewers become active participants in the artwork.

Overall, and what I'm mostly attracted to "*Gutter Corner Splash Night Shift*" work, is that by the manipulation of materials, Serra creates a visceral piece that speaks to the essential connection between gesture, action, and the material itself.



Richard Serra / *Gutter Corner Splash* (1965-1995).



Chapter 2: Overthinking

Body and Identity.

1. What body?

I begin by grounding myself in the physicality of my own being, embodying a Latin American woman with Spanish roots. I navigate my thoughts and expressions in Spanish, now translating them into English as I adapt as a migrant in this unfamiliar environment.

This individual body expands to a collective body when thinking of these other bodies that have transit geographical boundaries, sharing a common journey. A body that moves from one place to another as one. As an artist, I embrace this perspective, weaving together personal narratives and collective experiences to create a rich tapestry of meaning and interpretation.

Identity is a base and a drive for the development of my artistic research and practice. Exploring identity and the sense of being and becoming is a means of comprehending our embodiment, with a significant emphasis on the role of location and situated knowledge.

Drawing inspiration from Donna Haraway's concept of situated knowledge², I recognize that all forms of knowledge are shaped by the specific conditions in which they arise, inherently reflecting the social identities and locations of the knowledge producers.

The main idea behind this concept is to challenge the traditional and objective forms of knowledge that claim to be universal and detached from any particular social or cultural context. As Haraway argues, knowledge is always situated and it's shaped by the specific social, historical, and political contexts in which it is produced. By acknowledging the situated nature of knowledge, we can begin to appreciate the diverse ways in which different social, historical, and political contexts shape our understanding of reality.

2. Haraway, Donna. *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective*. Feminist Studies, Inc, 1988.

“Language is migrant. Words move from language to language, from culture to culture, from mouth to mouth. Our bodies are migrants, cells and bacteria are migrants too. Even galaxies migrate.”

Vicuña, Cecilia. 2016.³

2. Body as materiality.

I’m interested in the body as a materiality and dynamic entity that has the capacity to be in constant change, communication and exchange. A concept that resonates deeply with contemporary understandings of embodiment and existence. By this perspective I try to challenge the conventional notions of the body as a static, bounded entity with clearly defined borders, and instead, the body as a fluid and porous entity that is constantly in dialogue with its environment.

Our bodies are in constant communication with other bodies, with the spaces we inhabit, and with the passage of time itself. They are shaped and influenced by these relations and corporeal experience, blurring the boundaries between self and other, interior and exterior, individual and collective.

Consider, for example, the ways in which our bodies exchange matter and energy with the environment through basic processes such as breathing. Every breath we take draws in air that has circulated through countless other bodies and territories, carrying with it traces of their presence and history.

I believe that this confluence is an important and constant happening that makes our corporeality become expanded. In this framework, the boundaries of the body become porous and permeable and our corporeality is not confined to the borders of our skin but rather extends outward.

3. Vicuña, Cecilia. “*Language Is Migrant*.” documenta 14. Accessed October 12, 2023. https://www.documenta14.de/en/south/904_language_is_migrant.

3. Body and the territory.

Territory and the body are the most relevant concepts surrounding the research of my master's project. From the point of view of a migrant person, I feel a strong connection with the idea that the place/territory where we are located has a great influence on our way of communicating and expressing ourselves. There is no such thing as a view from nowhere.

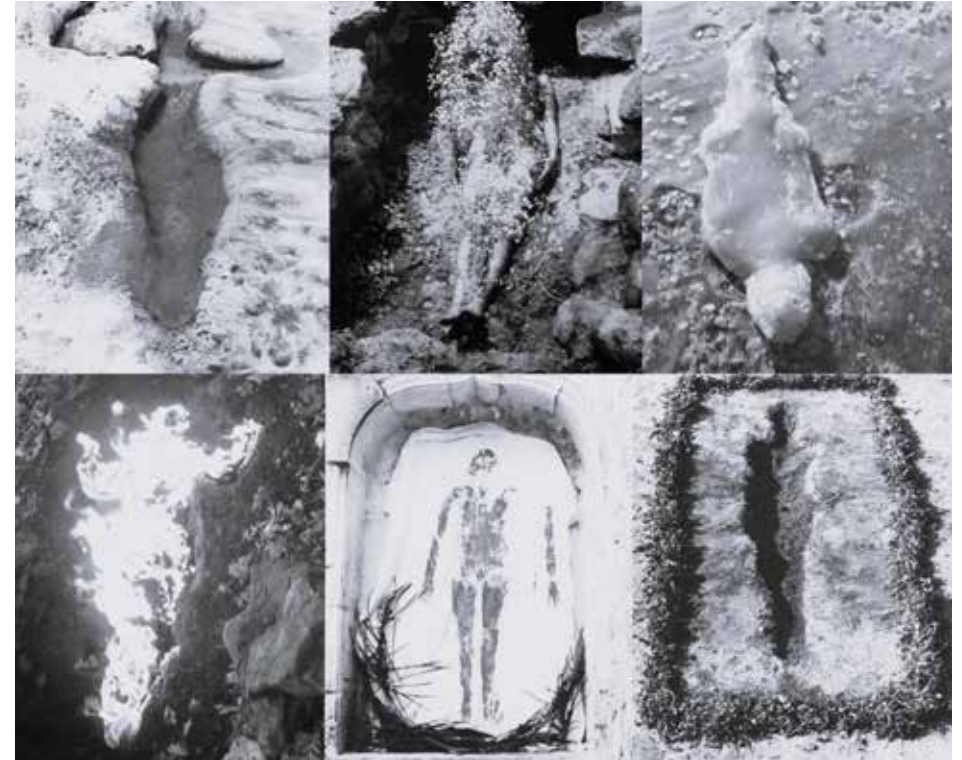
The interaction between the body and the landscape is dynamic where the physical form engages with the surrounding environment in a multitude of ways. From the feet making contact with the earth to the senses absorbing the sights, sounds, and textures, the body becomes a conduit for experiencing the landscape. Movements, gestures, and postures adapt to the terrain, and the body responds to the elements of the sun, wind, and water, creating a harmonious exchange between the self and the surroundings. In this relation, the landscape leaves its imprint on the body and the body leaves an imprint in the landscape.

I find inspiration from the "Earth-Body Works" by artist Ana Mendieta. These series explore themes of identity, connection to the natural world, and the body as a site of expression and transformation. Through a combination of performance, sculpture, and photography, Mendieta creates a deeply visceral and evocative body of work that challenges conventional notions of art and the human experience.

"Earth-Body Works" is Mendieta's exploration of her own identity as a woman, an immigrant, and a Latin American with Cuban roots. From her own experiences and cultural heritage, she uses her body as a canvas to explore themes of belonging, displacement, and the search for connection.

Her work often involves the use of natural materials and the landscape, incorporating elements such as earth, water, and fire into her performances and sculptures. With this method Mendieta blurs the boundaries between the human body and the natural world in a delicate way, highlighting in some way the interconnectedness of the landscape and the body. Through her performances, which often involve ritualistic actions such as burying herself in the earth or tracing her silhouette with fire, Mendieta creates a sense of primal energy and raw emotion.

Overall, "Earth-Body Works" represents a powerful exploration of the human condition and the relationship with our surroundings, something which resonates deeply with my own artistic practice and research. She creates a body of work that is at once deeply intimate and personal and can also resonate in an universal manner.



Ana Mendieta / Silueta Series (1974)

Diaspora.

1. Migrant body.

The dynamics of capitalist globalization is characterized by the mobility of people, objects and ideas. Migrants generate connections with multiple territories, transgressing spatial scales of the place of origin and destination, crossing geographical, cultural and political borders.

Referring to Judith Butler's concept of "the right to appear"⁴, which intersects with her broader exploration of performativity and the ways in which identity is constructed and contested through social norms and practices. Butler argues that within contemporary political contexts, some lives are viewed as invisible or disposable, while others are privileged and protected. This differential distribution of vulnerability and recognition is often based on factors such as race, nationality, gender, sexuality, and socio-economic classes.

I think we can all relate or understand this point of view from our own territories. In Chile, for example, migrants from different parts of the world have moved throughout history, leaving their mark and becoming part of the country's collective, but their marginalization and invisibility have always been evident. The immigration process was first of Hispanic origin, during colonization (16th century - 18th century), followed by different European origins from the Middle East (19th century - 20th century), to end with the most recent immigration, coming from Latin American countries, usually neighboring countries, and to a lesser extent from some Asian countries. These groups of immigrants had different motivations, although mostly economic, political or war-related.

Going back to Butler ideas, she argues that the right to appear, gives individuals and groups not only to demand visibility and recognition but also to challenge dominant narratives and power structures that seek to marginalize or erase their existence.

In her analysis, the highlights are on how certain populations, particularly those marginalized or deemed as "Other" within dominant discourses, are denied the right to appear fully within the public sphere. She emphasizes the importance of challenging this politics of invisibility and exclusion by affirming the inherent worth and dignity of all individuals and communities.

In this sense, I find beautiful how the migrant body "appears" as a territorialization device, which through its performance, it expands and takes control of the territory to which it arrives and transforms it, integrating material and symbolic agents with territorial expressions, carrying discourses and emotions that reflect its territoriality.

4. Butler, Judith. *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 9-70, 2015.

2. Family background.

I have lived in Chile all of my life until I migrated to Norway in 2022 led by my curiosity and thrive for new territories to delve myself in. As I mentioned in the introduction, seventy and eighty years ago, my grandparents migrated too, on a much different context. My grandmother, María Luisa Bou (Ela) her and her parents, grandmother and brother migrated in November of 1939, after the end of the Spanish Civil War and shortly after the beginning of World War II. In the case of my grandfather Antonio Baus (Tata), him, his parents and brother arrived in Chile on August of 1953, during the Cold War.

My grandmother and her family crossed the Atlantic Ocean on a ship called El Salta, arriving to Buenos Aires, Argentina and then travelling by train, crossing the Andes Mountain to Santiago, Chile on the 14th of august of the same year. The details about my grandparent's journey are not that clear, but I do know for sure that they also traveled on a military boat from Spain.

This past family histories makes me wonder if their bodies are still present in the spaces where they passed through or if these spaces give us some knowledge of its fragments. There is a relationship between the individuals in the process of migration and the physical environment through which they journey. This connection involves the dynamic interplay of the migrant body with the geographical, cultural, and natural surroundings. The landscape, influences and is influenced by the movements, experiences, and adaptations of the migrating bodies.

I'm thinking about the contrast between the organic of the body and its fluidity, with the structure that certain limits such as territorial boundaries and the borders of our own body, appears to have. Boundaries which become practically invisible with the transit and therefore the constant expansion of our bodies as such.



My grandparents on a boat in some chilean coast. (1958)

Water as a common place.

1. The materiality of water.

Through a persistent observation, or perhaps an ongoing obsession, I have identified shared elements between certain characteristics inherent to the waters that envelop us in their natural surroundings and the expansion of the body that I'm curious about. I see water, above all, as an elemental connection binding humans to the surrounding world, from the oceans and river that joins territories, to the significant presence of water within our own bodies. From this approach to the water as materiality, I find really interesting the way Anna Tsing refers to material practices on her writings in the publication "More-than-Human"⁵. She refers to three interventions to get into the material without shadowing it with her own body.

The first one, and one that I feel really connected with, is direct observation. This direct observation can be a very useful tool for learning about multispecies and non-human dynamics. I'm very intrigued on how this method can also bring to surface and connect this human and non-human traces that we can find on landscape materialities.

The second intervention Tsing mentions is to attune oneself to time to be able to identify this human and non-human responsiveness. For this intervention she collaborates with the artist and theorist Elaine Gan, developing the concept of "coordination" when watching the intra-action of the material. In this research they observed how humans, pines, oaks and matsutake mushrooms coordinate together making a space that is liveable for all. I find fascinating how this "coordination", doesn't necessarily require an intentional communication between the parts for it to be action and emergence happening and it's more of a continuity and fluid reciprocity.

At last, the third intervention addressed and one that also resonates in a profound way with my artistic practice is to ground research and analysis in the landscape. Tsing defines in a beautiful way the definition of landscape: *"is the sediment of human and non-human activities, biotic and abiotic, both meaningful and constructed without intent. Landscapes are active life worlds, held by material traces and legacies, but yet open to emerging forms and possibilities"*

Waterscapes can also be active realms that are shaped by this material traces and historical legacies, embodying constantly a multitude of distinctive patches. These landscapes can also be at any scale, whether is the ocean or a lake, or algae living in the deep sea creating micro-ecologies. From observing these spaces, I find a fascination how a material can emerge from these qualities, where there are multiple relations, transformations and communication between human and non-human activities.

5. Tsing, Anna L. *When the Things We Study Respond to Each Other. Tools for Unpacking 'the Material.'* Essay. In *More-than-Human*, 16–26, 2019.

“My gaze alights on the water, on this spot on the river, here where the water is turning around the currents turn the water in tightening circles. I can’t turn away. I want to feel time twist as I watch these spirals forming. I want to feel time twist and myself turning as I watch them disappear. I want to twist with the turning water. I want to watch these spirals turn themselves invisible. I want to watch them turning from the surface, turning down into the depths where I cannot see them. I want to turn invisible with them. I want to turn with them, invisible and keep turning.”

Black water is opaque water, toxic or not. Black water is always violent. Even when slow moving, black water dominates, bewitches, subdues. Black water is alluring because it is disturbing and irreconcilable. Black water is violent because it is alluring and because it is water.

Water is lubricant to other places. It dilutes gravity when you’re in it. It reduces friction when you’re around it. Almost any form of water—rivers, lakes, oceans, even sinks—will do. My mind roams freely, breezily near it. My thoughts take me backward and forward. Time has no direction near water. Water is lubricant to other places. It catalyzes memory and aspiration.

This water exists in monolithic, indivisible continuity with all other waters. No water is separate from any other water. In the River Thames, in an arctic iceberg, in your drinking glass, in that drop of rain, on that frosty window pane, in your eyes and in every other microcosmic part of you, and me, all waters converge.”⁶



6. Roni Horn. *still water (the river thames, for example)*. | moma. (n.d.). <https://www.moma.org/audio/play-list/247/3178>, 1999.

2. Water and the body.

Towards the idea of the body and its connection to water, I find myself in tune with the text: “Bodies of Water. Posthuman Feminist Phenomenology”⁷ by the theorist Astrida Neimanis.

As Astrida reimagines, rethink and redefines embodiment from the perspective of our body’s wet constitution, I also think of this connection with the body from the wet matter that constitutes us, and also on the fluid relation I find in certain qualities of water with the concept of the expansion of the body.

The paths and influences of water in the ecosystems where we live, shows how its cycle has a continuous movement within the Earth and the atmosphere. Liquid water evaporates into vapor, condenses to form clouds, and precipitates back to earth in the form of rain and snow. Liquid water as the one in our bodies, flows across the land, into the ground, and through the ground, expanding in the territory and leaving a trace in time.



Astrida Neimanis Instagram, n.d. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CsTyUNaLaNf/>.

7. Neimanis, Astrida. *Bodies of Water: Posthuman Feminist phenomenology*. London etc.: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

Waterscapes are in constantly changing, specially rapidly in case of natural disasters, climate changes and human activity. We are seeing all over the world a continuous land grabbing and exploitation of indigenous land, provoked by the impact of extractivist projects and hydroelectric power plants. These projects, in addition to causing a serious environmental impact, they have threatened the indigenous cosmovision, which conceives those territories as an extension of its own bodies.

The Sami, are a group of indigenous people spread across the northern borders of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, in a territory they call Sápmi. The Sami people and activists have demonstrated repeatedly against the Norwegian wind farm's continued operation arguing that a transition to green energy shouldn't come at the expense of the rights of Indigenous people. Not surprisingly, these extractivist practices threaten Latin American countries and third world territories all over the world.

Connecting the Norwegian territory with the territory of my own country, in Chile, Mapuche indigenous people has had a constant fight against the Chilean State and the Norwegian "green" company, Statkraft, which since 2014 began the development of the Los Lagos hydroelectric power plant on the Pilmaiquén River in Wallmapu, an ancestral site and sacred body of water for the Mapuche community and people.

Seba Calfuqueo is a Mapuche artist from Chile. Her work includes installation, ceramics, performance and video exploring both the cultural similarities and differences as well as the stereotypes that occur at the crossroads between indigenous and westernized ways of thinking. I'm interested in this specific piece because it embarks on a physical, intimate, and poetic exploration centered around water. It delves into the themes of the body, binary oppositions, gender, sexuality, the historical relationship between water and life, as well as their potential as a living space, necessary to the relationship of all territories.

Based on the indigenous cosmovisions of South America and the interference of hydroelectric projects in waterscapes, the artist narrates stories of connection and defense of these bodies of water, drawing parallels between the Mapuche community and the indigenous peoples of the Amazon.



Seba Calfuqueo / Kowkülen, Ser líquido (2020)



Chapter 3: Final pieces.

Process.

For the construction of the final pieces for the exhibition I continued working with wax modelled pieces in a bigger scale. First, I melted the wax at 45°, for then pouring it in one movement into a big bucket of cold water. In an instant the wax solidifies as it touches the water. A liquid layer of wax is placed on top of the piece that's floating in the water. I grab it with my hands feeling the hot and softness of the material as it shapes together with my body. With this technique the trace of the corporal gesture in the act of pouring the melted wax in the water, is captured on the material, as well as the pieces are left with the imprints of the traces left by my hands. After modelling the wax, each fragment is joint together melting and attaching them into a bigger piece. For the casting process there are several stages to follow. First, I needed to make wax channels attached to each piece for the metal to run.



When this is already stable, I started the process of dipping each of them with slurry and silicate sand several times until I got a consistent and solid shell. After the shell is totally dried, the wax that's inside of the shells is melted in one of the kilns of the foundry room for preparing it to be casted.



The molten aluminium is poured inside the moulds and then the process of cleaning begins. Since my pieces have a lot of detailed, I spent a lot of time cleaning the pieces, hammering and sand blasting each of them until they were as I wanted to.

As I mentioned before, this technic and way of working acquired an enormous sense of coherence in my master's project. First the material is shaped by the water and the body, and then the material disappears and it's replaced by another material appropriating the previous forms, spaces and traces.



The main materials I chose to work with are wax and aluminium. Wax as a malleable, fragile and fluid material that can be easily reconfigured and rebuilt into another shape and state. In contrast with aluminium as a solid and static material that captures the fluidity of the forms and traces in an apparent permanent object, although this material can also be melted and shaped over and over again, connecting with the qualities of the wax in a direct way.

The exhibition consists of several organic objects made of aluminium and wax placed on concrete volumes of different heights and dimensions. The volumes that hold each piece makes a contrast between the organic forms of the metal objects and the static form of the geometrical volumes made of concrete. The concrete volumes act as an extension of the architectural space holding and elevating the aluminium objects. The exhibition is placed outside in a space surrounded by concrete walls and round rocks on the floor. The sound of the water and its humidity is a constant that forms part of the installation.

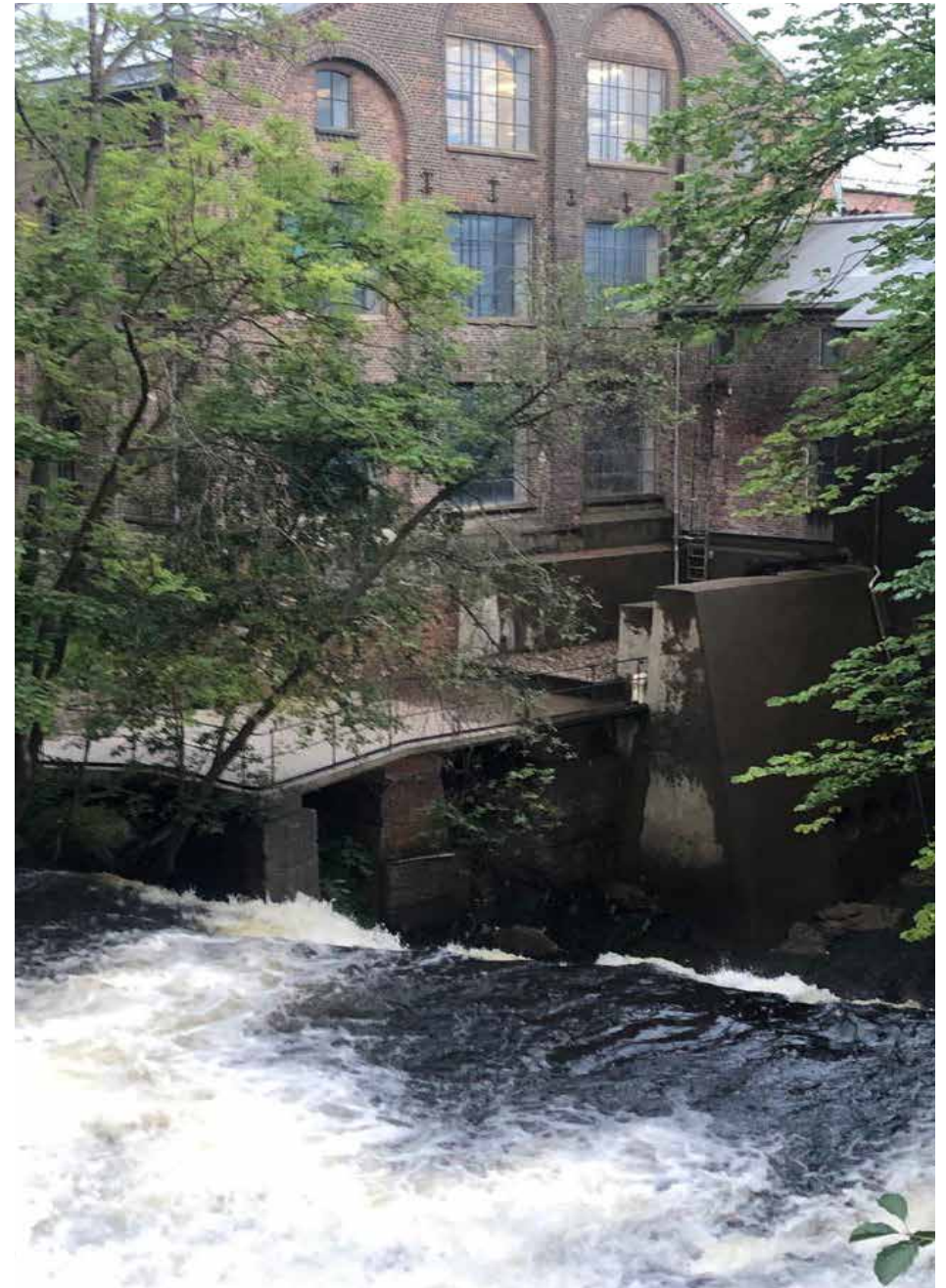


Exhibition Space.

For the graduation show I felt that it was important for my work to be in direct contact with an outside space where the weather conditions and its materialities were part of a crucial fragment comprising the total of the exhibition.

My every day walk from to school has been following the river. On these walks my attention was caught by a space besides the waterfall of Aker Selva right next to KHiO. I was really intrigued by it and I observed it continuously, noticing how it changed in a cyclic way as the seasons went by. The snow covered the rocky floor for several weeks illuminating the space in these dark and quiet months. Suddenly everything was wet and the humidity painted the concrete walls and impregnated them with a darker shade. The sound of the water in its maximum volume embraced the place. Colorful leaves were moved by the sound of the wind during autumn, and all of a sudden, the water was silent again and the whiteness surrounded the space again.

My senses were attracted by the sound of the water that constantly surrounds the space, the strength and dynamic fluidity of the river in contrast to the static and stable concrete that forms the architecture of the adjacent building. I decided to challenge myself and place my work there finding a way to show my pieces making a clear relationship between them and the space in a fluid way.



Water

*Simple spell conjuring a new green world.
Made of the mist. Rain forest's dream.
Clouds in their own time. Ice holding slow time.
The charm of snow, here and now and gone.
Sea's ebb and flow. River's ever-running mirror.
The glass urn full. The necessary rain.
The vanished rain. Lakes wasted to dust
and dead bikes. Parched parks. Death Valley flooded.
An ice cube's tiny arctic in your drink going,
going like the ancient shields of ice...
The enchantment of water still sings on
in its wavering wheel. In this planet's perfect blue.⁸*

8. "Water" is a part of the work TIPPING POINTS composed by Rachel Portman for violin and orchestra, with poems by Nick Drake.



Conclusion.

During the two-year journey at KHiO my artistic practice has been greatly influenced by the context that currently surrounds me. My research has focused on the relationship between the body and the landscape, focusing specifically on the malleability and porosity of the body that allows its boundaries to blur and its corporeality to expand.

As a material-based artist material experimentation was always present hand in hand with the theoretical development, moving between textile, ceramics, plaster and going back to metal. This exploration led me to find a greater coherence in my way working, both materially and technically.

Above all, this project represents a very enriching and important stage in my artistic career and my personal development, immersing myself in a new environment, both geographically and creatively, moving from my home country to Norway and embracing the challenges, experiences, and emotions that come with such a transition.

And I still wonder,
Where does my body starts and where does it ends?

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Almendra Baus Rusiñol.

Del cuerpo el rastro permanece
Of the body the trace remains

2024.