



Entangled Others, (di)atomic garden (still preview)

The Museum of Fine Arts Le Locle - MBAL is participating in Art Genève for the second time, the international contemporary art fair bringing together galleries and institutions from Switzerland and around the world. For the occasion, the MBAL will unveil the fifth capsule of the ORBIT\_E programme, curated by Marlène Wenger.

Launched in 2022, the digital platform ORBIT\_E is a virtual extension of MBAL, designed to extend and complement the artistic programme presented at the museum. ORBIT\_E, referencing both the eye's orbital cavity and planetary trajectories —the platform functions as an experimental and transdisciplinary laboratory exploring the scope of action and the energy of contemporary digital creation. Through ORBIT\_E, MBAL continues its commitment to supporting artists by accompanying the production and dissemination of digital artworks. By promoting these practices, the museum aims to contribute to their institutional recognition and to take part in the broader movement exploring new voices within the field of contemporary art.

**5th ORBIT\_E Capsule : (di)atomic garden**

By the artist duo Entangled Others (Feileacan McCormick and Sofia Crespo)

Curated by Marlène Wenger (HEK Basel)

The fifth capsule of the ORBIT\_E project, developed by the duo *Entangled Others*, brings together historical archives, virtual data, and scientific research to imagine a fictional online garden.

**(di)atomic garden** examines the ways in which radioactivity alters natural environments and living organisms, simulating processes of virtual irradiation. Scenarios envisioning what might biologically occur when life forms are exposed to radioactivity intertwine with data drawn from agricultural history and Antarctic plankton.

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# M L B A

The project draws on the little-known history of atomic gardens—experimental fields developed after the Second World War to explore so-called “peaceful” applications of nuclear energy. By exposing crops to cobalt-60, researchers induced mutations that sometimes resulted in higher yields, new colours, or unprecedented forms—varieties that can still be found in seed catalogues today. Although these open-air radioactive fields have largely disappeared, irradiation-induced mutagenesis continues to be practiced in laboratory settings.

At the same time, radionuclides originating from nuclear weapons tests, reactor accidents, and industrial discharges have entered the oceans over recent decades. Now present at low concentrations and mixed with natural background radiation, they do not render the seas uninhabitable. However, they create conditions in which organisms—from plankton to fish—live under chronic, low-level exposure. While the effects of high doses are well documented, the long-term ecological consequences of lower exposures remain uncertain, particularly when combined with warming, acidification, and other environmental disturbances.

These uncertainties form the conceptual backbone of **(di)atomic garden**

## ***Entangled Others***

### **Artists**

Entangled Others is an experimental artist duo composed of Feileacan Kirkbride McCormick and Sofia Crespo. In their practice, McCormick and Crespo explore the strange and unsettling spaces that lie between human technologies and non-human worlds, advocating for the dissolution of the distance we impose between ourselves and the richness of our interdependent existence. Their work questions notions of technological bias and the representation of natural species, proposing new ways of understanding the relationships between humans, technology, and more-than-human life.

Their work has been presented internationally at institutions and events including the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, NeueHouse LA in Los Angeles, Oxford University, and the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

## **Marlene Wenger**

### **Curator**

Marlene Wenger is an art historian and curator specialising in digital and post-digital artistic practices. She studied at the University of Bern and the Freie Universität Berlin, earning her doctorate in 2021 with a thesis on post-digital exhibition strategies.

After completing her studies, she worked for Art Basel Unlimited, the Migros Museum of Contemporary Art in Zurich, and as an assistant at Stadtgalerie Bern, as well as curating a private video art collection in Bern. From 2020 to 2023 she served as a curatorial assistant in the Contemporary Art department at the Kunstmuseum Bern.

Since 2023, she has been Head of Programme and curator at the House of Electronic Arts (HEK) in Basel, where she co-curated projects including *Virtual Beauty* (2024) and *Other Intelligences* (2025). In her curatorial work, she develops long-term projects and programme strands focused on digital culture, artificial intelligence, augmented reality, gaming, and contemporary forms of online subjectivity.

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## THE FINE ARTS MUSEUM OF LOCLE - MBAL

The Fine Arts Museum of Le Locle – MBAL is a leading institution in Switzerland with an international reputation, thanks to programming that is both bold and accessible. The museum offers monographic and thematic exhibitions that broaden perspectives and bring together art from yesterday and today, from here and elsewhere, creating a dialogue between works from its collection and contemporary Swiss and international creation. Located in the city centre of Le Locle and established in 1862, the MBAL occupies a magnificent Art Nouveau building renovated in 2014. It features 800 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space as well as a virtual platform dedicated to digital art, ORBIT\_E. The collection, comprising around 5,000 pieces – paintings, sculptures, and works on paper by Swiss and international artists from the 17th century to today – also includes prestigious deposits such as those from the Swiss Confederation and the Gottfried Keller Foundation.

Under the direction of curator and writer Federica Chiocchetti (PhD) since 2022, MBAL pursues an inclusive programming and an acquisition policy committed to gender equality, with the goal of achieving parity.



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Mercredi - dimanche : 11h00 - 17h00  
Premier dimanche du mois : Free admission