

## RESTLESS EARTH

a multichannel video installation by  
Matthias Fritsch

The current climate emergency manifests not only the consequences of reckless anthropogenic activity, but also the planet's agency and power. Phenomena like wildfires and floods remind us harshly of Earth's vibrancy and instability. The planet is restlessly in motion. Elements like earth, water, air and fire have always been in constant flow granting life to ecosystems, or at times threatening their survival. However, never before in human history has there been such an intensity of extreme environmental conditions, affecting the possibility for different species to survive. In the name of progress for the privileged part of the world, excessive carbon emissions can no longer be sufficiently stored in vegetation, the soil and the oceans. Once the cycles of carbon and matter are disrupted, rapid changes in the atmosphere and biosphere are unavoidable affecting all living organisms.

*Restless Earth* turns to the fundamental elements of matter, studying their role in producing and maintaining life. It depicts earth, water, air and fire paying attention to their in-between encounters and transformations. The project draws inspiration from the theory of four elements as stated already in ancient philosophy, the principle of interdependence of organisms found in modern biology, as well as the concept of the agency of matter as mentioned in contemporary philosophy and physics.

The 15-channel installation presents a world in motion, introducing its multiple agents

and their ongoing interactions and contradicting realities. Water is captured in images of wild waves, and in the view of a polluted stagnant lake. Earth as soil is depicted together with its nonhuman workers, the organisms keeping it alive, and also as dust of a degraded and overexploited ground. Wind is present in the natural phenomena on screen, but also in a shot of wind turbines dominating the landscape. Fire is portrayed as a source for heat, but also as a violent destructive force in a forest. In these alternating images of life, movement and decay, anthropogenic activity is implied, but humans are rare to find. It is rather animals, plants and fungi, seas and lands that are portrayed as protagonists, operating together in and for a living planet.

*Restless Earth* is the outcome of consistent research of Matthias Fritsch on autonomous and sustainable ways of living. As a filmmaker and as somebody who works with land, he invites us to acknowledge the interrelatedness of the elements with all forms of life, and to reflect upon our role in the restless effort of Earth to balance changes and losses.

Curated by Daphne Dragona

The exhibition *Restless Earth* is organized by ARTos House as part of the residency "Gaia knows, do we?" of the CONTINUUM project, co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme and the Cyprus Deputy Ministry of Culture.

Channels  
(starting left from the entrance)

01 FIRE

Various stages of burning fire.  
3:50 min

02 CLOUDS

Timelapses of cloud movements and formations.  
5:45 min

03 WATER

Various stages of moving water.  
5:00 min

04 ICE

Morning frost forming bizarre ice crystals.  
1:30 min

05 STORM

Impressions of storms in forests.  
2:30 min

06 SPORES

Mushroom spores travel thousands of kilometres in high altitudes and become condensation points for new rain.  
5:10 min

07 SOIL

Portraits of animals creating fertile topsoil.  
7:30 min

08 SOIL LOSS

Dust clouds over fields point to how conventional farming practices deteriorate the top soil and weaken future yields.  
4:20 min

09 CONCRETE

Large construction sites affect the ground and the formation of future geological layers.  
2:50 min

10 LIFE

Some animal species follow humans and adjust to urban environments.  
3:30 min

11 URBAN POLLUTION

Poor and irresponsible waste management is evident at the edges of cities.  
1:20 min

12 WATER POLLUTION

A mixture of over fertilized and polluted water inhabited by a duck population.  
6:15 min

13 LIGHT POLLUTION

Fireflies disturbed by car lights, and moths disorientated by streetlights.  
4:00 min

14 ELECTRIC LANDSCAPE

Wind farms change the appearance of landscapes.  
7:20 min

15 FOREST FIRES

Wildfires in the suburbs pollute and threaten the city.  
5:15 min