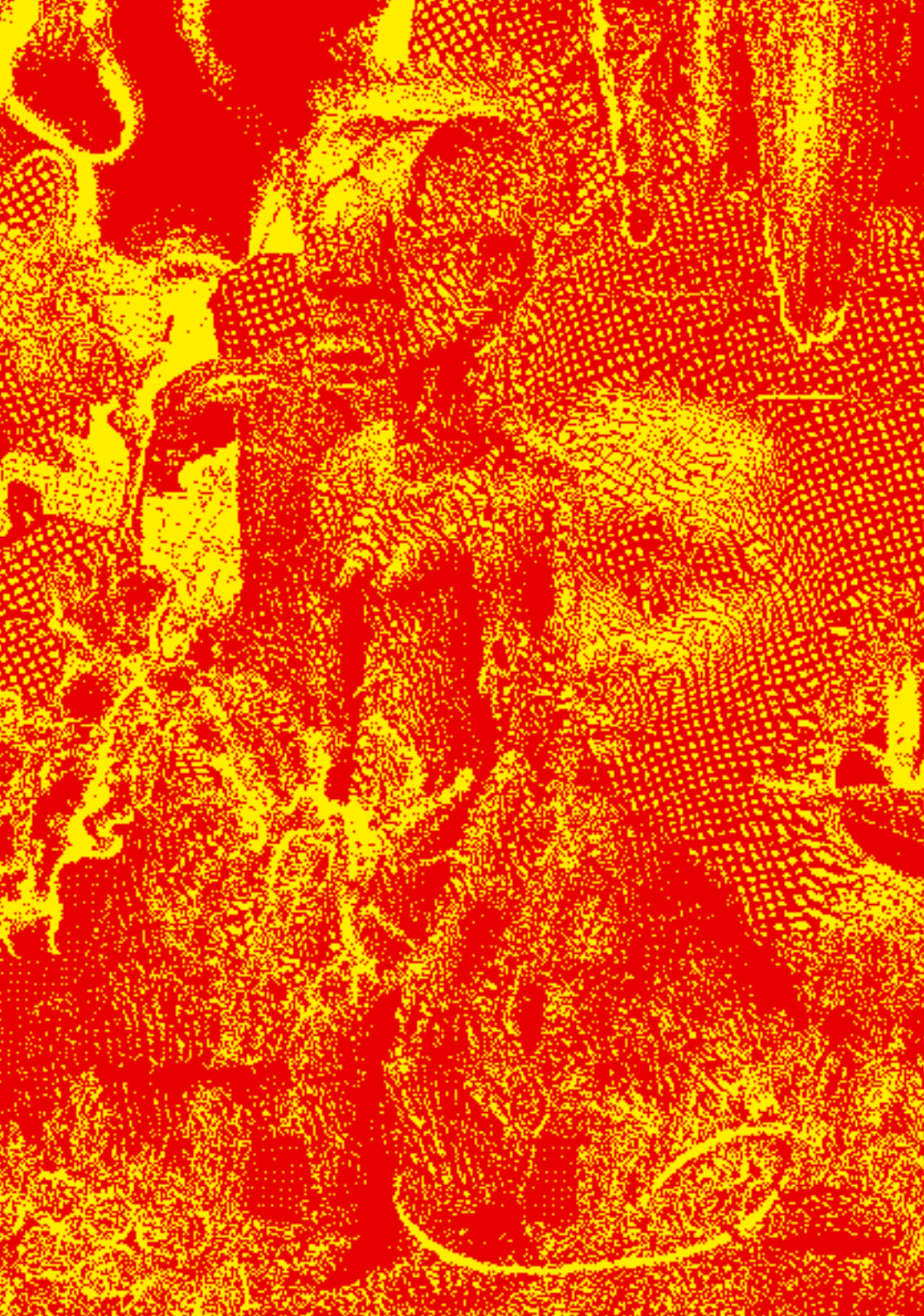


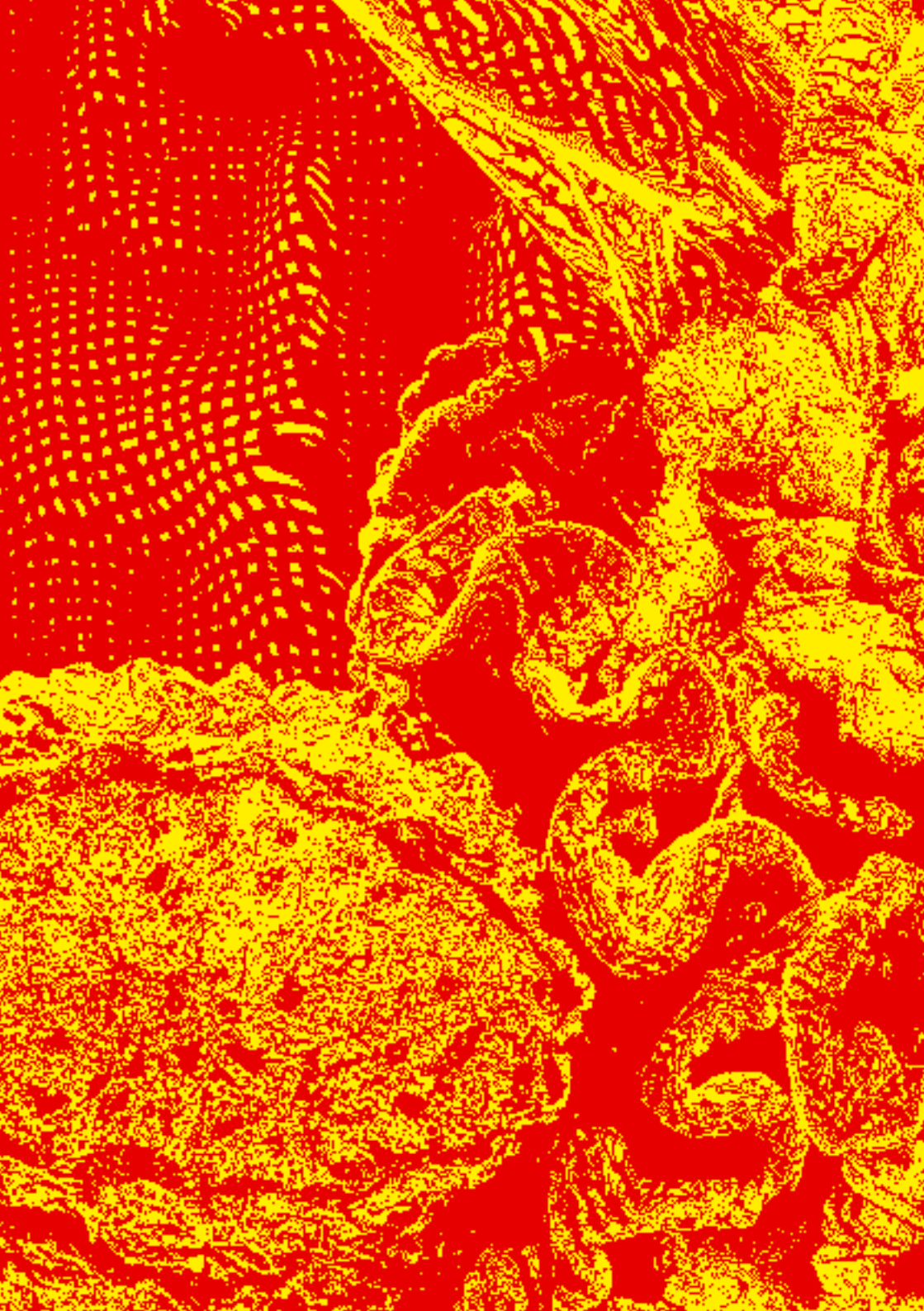
JOSÈFA NITTAM

INTRICATIONS



A world resurfaces, fragment by fragment, to the slow rhythm of forms in recomposition. For her largest exhibition to date, Josèfa Ntjam transforms the 1,200 m² of the Institut d'art contemporain and the display windows of the Gare Part-Dieu metro station into a sensory, political, and mythological drift. A territory where everything wavers: textures, voices, memories... Here, form follows the fracture, and legend, the beat of an underground heart.

The title, **INTRICATIONS [ENTANGLEMENTS]**, comes from quantum physics. It expresses this: that two particles, even when separated by light-years, can continue to vibrate together. It is this bond woven between things that seem entirely apart — skin and metal, revolt and plant, cry and comet — that flows through the entire journey of the exhibition.



INTRICATIONS [ENTANGLEMENTS] unfolds like an expanding fiction. One enters as into a forest of images, a threshold of matter: dense, nearly impenetrable. Marthe Ekemeyong Moumié, Élisabeth Djouka, and Mafory Bangoura stand watch here, guardians of the stories that are about to be told. In their wake, Persona, Marthe and Saturna — shifting avatars, embodied without being assigned — are crossed by voices, bodies, and data. They never speaks from a single “I” but from a network: of Black memory, matriarchal lineages, queer identities, and suppressed histories. Their voice are refracted, doubled, as if to show that all speech from the margins is layered.

Brought together, these figures – real or imagined – intertwine with Dogon¹, Fang², and Bassa³ cosmogonies, as well as diasporic myths born of exile. A teeming maquis as much as a fantasized biotope, the exhibition space shelters its own speculative mythology, populated with chimeric figures and biological entities. These latter, chosen for their structural or biological capacities, embody a discreet strength: that of building in the shadows while endlessly regenerating themselves. Interlaced, the whole rubs and resonates to produce new images, fugitives in the making. What’s at stake is a poetics of flight — not as abandonment, but as strategy, as the science of escape and displacement. Clandestine, aquatic, shifting, fiction here is resistance.

To compose it, Josèfa Ntjam draws from everything: cardboard and bio-resin, video game engines and artificial intelligence, sand, metal, and song. She experiments. She melds. She assembles as one invents worlds. And at the heart of this world: a sound installation — the artist’s first of its kind — conceived especially for the IAC. A sensitive center of gravity, it acts like a beating heart, an echo chamber that absorbs and redistributes the vibrations of the journey.

Around it, the cosmos resonates. A ground for speculation, it serves as a shelter for voices cast out by dominant narratives and for dreams reality has not yet permitted. In **INTRICATIONS [ENTANGLEMENTS]**, the legend is alive. It does not illuminate; it murmurs, it twists, it draws us in. And perhaps with it, our gaze, too, begins to reconfigure. Josèfa Ntjam places herself in the lineage of those who think with fiction — not to flee reality, but to reveal its invisible folds. With Sun Ra, Octavia Butler, Drexciya, or Kodwo Eshun⁴, she dreams — yes — but dreams with teeth, with roots, with the sea.

Sarah Caillet
Curator of the exhibition

① The Dogon, settled on the Bandiagara cliffs in Mali, carry a cyclical cosmogony intertwining origin myths, aquatic figures such as the Nommos, and symbolic knowledge transmitted orally.

② The Fang, a Bantu people from Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and southern Cameroon, transmit through the Mvett—an initiatory narrative connecting philosophy, history, and spirituality.

③ The Bassa, based mainly in Cameroon, root their tradition in orality. Through song and poetry, they transmit initiatory stories that recount ancestral memory, migrations, and spiritual knowledge.

④ Sun Ra, Octavia Butler, Drexciya, and Kodwo Eshun are major figures of Afrofuturism: they explore and reinvent narratives, blending music, literature, mythology, and speculative critique to imagine emancipated Black futures.

JOSÈFA NTJAM

Born in 1992 in Metz.
Lives and works
in Saint-Étienne.

Josèfa Ntjam is an artist, performer, and writer. Her practice combines sculpture, photomontage, film, and sound. Drawing from sources as varied as the Internet, natural sciences, and photographic archives, she uses assemblage as a method to invent speculative worlds.

By bringing together heterogeneous discourses and iconographies, she reclaims History in order to imagine as-yet-undetermined space-times—worlds where the usual systems of perception and classification lose their meaning. Technology, intergalactic journeys, and even hypothetical underwater civilizations then become the foundations of inclusive and resilient communities.



HALL #1

• *Sanctuaire des pluies
anciennes, 2025*

For the first time, Josèfa Ntjam unfolds her digital collages on a human scale. Around thirty cutouts, printed on transparent plexiglass and dense foam, form a three-dimensional landscape. Shapes float, intertwine, and overlap, offering a new kind of experience: the collage is no longer an image to contemplate, but an environment to inhabit. Each layer, each material enters into dialogue with the room and with the presence of those who move within it.

In this sculptural forest, figures of resistance to colonial oppression share the stage with mythological creatures inspired by the cosmogonies of Central and West Africa. Alongside them, plants and animals weave into the space: the bramble, thorny and resilient; the hydras, endlessly able to regenerate; corals, fragile builders of collective architectures... Each element, whether real or invented, is chosen for its ability to transmit memory, resilience, and strength.

The sensory experience reveals entanglements: the collage acts as an ecosystem where archives, myths, and fictions are bound together. As they move through the space, visitors activate resonances between the elements, probe the interstices, and compose their own exploration.

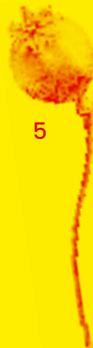
1 **Hadja Aissatou Mafory Bangoura** (1910–1976) was a Guinean activist and emblematic figure in the struggle for independence. Committed to the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA), she was one of the leading figures of its Guinean section, the Parti Démocratique de Guinée (PDG). She organized and led women's mobilizations against colonial domination, playing a strategic role in the 1958 referendum for independence. She later became the first Guinean woman to serve as a minister.

2 **Marthe Ekemeyong Moumié** (1925–2009) was a Cameroonian independence activist, engaged from the 1950s within the Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC). Alongside her husband Félix Moumié, and later on her own after his assassination by the French counter-espionage service in 1960, she continued the anticolonial struggle. In 1952, she co-founded the Union Démocratique des Femmes Camerounaises, which promoted women's inclusion in Cameroonian society.

3 **Elisabeth Djouka** (1944–2024) was a Cameroonian activist involved in the UPC's guerrilla networks. She played a crucial role in the logistics of the anticolonial struggle—housing, transmitting messages, and circulating materials—before being arrested and imprisoned. A shadow figure, she embodies those women whose courage sustained the revolution from behind the scenes.

4 Both animal and plant, **plankton** drifts with the ocean currents. This assemblage of microscopic organisms lives collectively and forms the base of the food chain. One of its forms, phytoplankton, produces nearly half of the oxygen we breathe. Fragile, adaptable, and vital, plankton embodies both the memory of the oceans—through the sediments it deposits on the seabed—and the interconnection of all living things.

5 **The poppy** is the source of opium, a substance with both medicinal properties and powerful recreational uses. An ambivalent symbol, it embodies both healing and the danger of a deadly poison, recalling the fine line between remedy and destruction.



HALL

#2

• *Dislocations*,
2022

Persona, a recurring avatar in Josèfa Ntjam's practice, moves through the layers of a fractured past. They drift through the cosmos before reaching a cave that is both underwater and interstellar. Once a refuge for Bassa maquisards during the Cameroonian independence struggle, this cavity acts as a matrix, a site of transformation where memories are deposited and reactivated.

Over the course of their journey, Persona gradually merges with an aqueous substance. Categories collapse, shells dissolve, yet traces persist: inscribed in water, in droplets and sediments, as indelible marks. Scattered archives and family stories—sometimes entrusted for the very first time—thus become precious fragments of a history long buried. By pushing aside fixed heroic figures, the artist summons other faces: forgotten colonial soldiers, underground fighters, silenced ancestors.

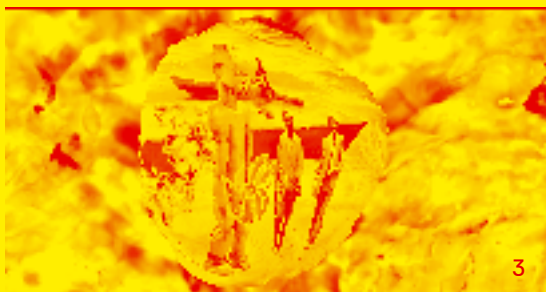
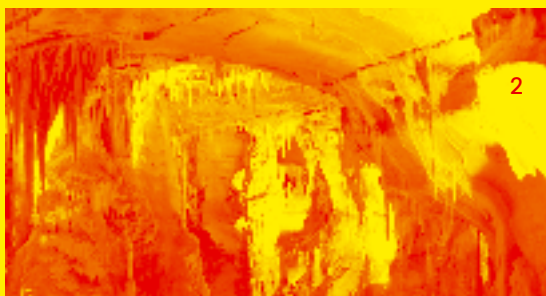
Against this backdrop, the cosmos opens an emancipatory horizon. It extends Afro-diasporic imaginaries and offers an elsewhere from which to reconfigure the present. Persona, in this cycle of dissolution and mutation, embodies the circulation of inheritances and their power of recomposition. *Dislocations* thus appears as a gesture of repair in response to the gaps in the official narrative of French colonization.

1 In the 1950s, Cameroon experienced an armed struggle led by UPC activists. These resisters, known as **maquisards**, fought against French colonization. Settled in rural areas, they embodied the quest for independence in the face of violent repression. Long silenced, their memory remains a crucial issue in the history of both Cameroon and French colonialism.

2 **The cave** is a closed space with multiple potentialities which, like the maquis, becomes a site of resistance. Used as a hiding place by the maquisards, it was part of a strategy of survival, combat, and struggle. The artist used photogrammetry of the Trou du Renard cave (Soyons, Ardèche) to generate the setting for *Dislocations*.

3 In her works, Josèfa Ntjam sometimes uses images of West African sculptures as a gesture aimed at "liberating" these statues from the weight of colonial domination. Still massively present in French collections, they were taken through looting and raise the question of rightful return to their countries of origin. Guardian of ancestry, this **reliquary** has the power to transmit across genealogies.

4 **Sun Ra** (1914–1993) was an avant-garde jazz musician, composer, and philosopher. From the 1950s onward, Sun Ra claimed to come from Saturn in order to escape the oppressive constraints of American society. With his Arkestra, he transformed concerts into collective rituals combining costumes, poetry, and improvisation. He drew inspiration from ancient Egypt to create his futuristic outfits. The Persona costume pays homage to this aesthetic.



HALL

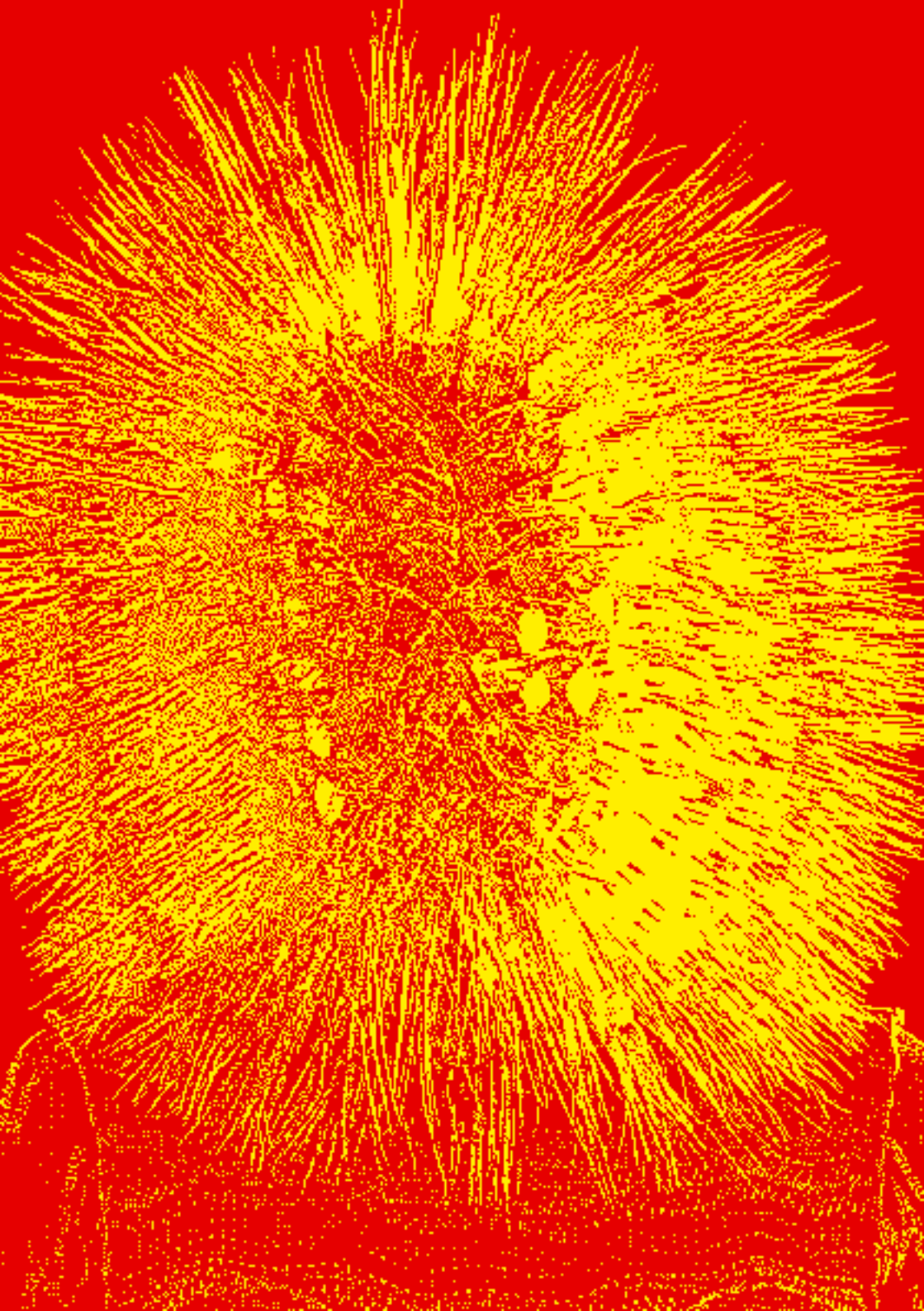
#3

- *Incubateurs de révolte*, 2023–2025
- *Marthe, matter gone wild*, 2023
- *and it's not tragic*, 2023

Like something straight out of a science fiction film, the *Incubateurs de révolte* [*Incubators of Revolt*] appear as cells of training for insurrection. Visitors, placed in a state of instability, are continually confronted with shifting floors, reflecting the constant adaptations imposed on racialized people. Walking—the foundational gesture of any demonstration—becomes an act of positioning, turning the incubators into a political stage.

Inside, video works close to tutorials deliver tools and advice for carrying out insurrection. The first, *Marthe, matter gone wild*, features an avatar loosely inspired by Marthe Ekemeyong Moumié who enumerates recipes for uprising. She unveils secrets such as the preparation of a black paste to be applied in poultices on monuments, or a fermented juice to be sprayed through the streets. These recipes extend those imagined in 2018 for *Plantes en révoltes* [*Plants in Revolt*], one of Ntjam's earliest performances.

The second, *and it's not tragic*, releases open-ended questions across the screen within a setting shimmering with aquatic reflections. They invite each of us to probe our own relation to revolt, to galvanize the spirit and stoke the embers of latent insubordination. The incubators thus become laboratories of futures in gestation, factories of alliances where concrete strategies mingle with emancipatory fictions. They open a sphere of projection in which commitment unfolds as a vital resource.



HALL

#4

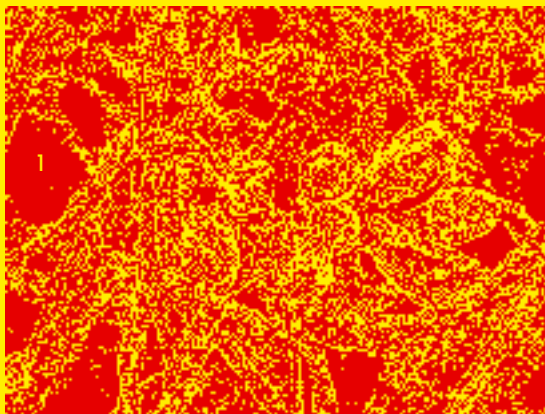
- *Luciferin Drop*, 2020
- *Myceaquia Vitae*, 2020

The work *Myceaquia Vitae*, the fruit of a research residency at SNOLAB in Canada—one of the deepest astrophysics laboratories in the world—blends science and legend to imagine an alternative genesis in which life on Earth emanates from the cosmos. Between incantation and invocation, the artist's voice accompanies this enigmatic fable.

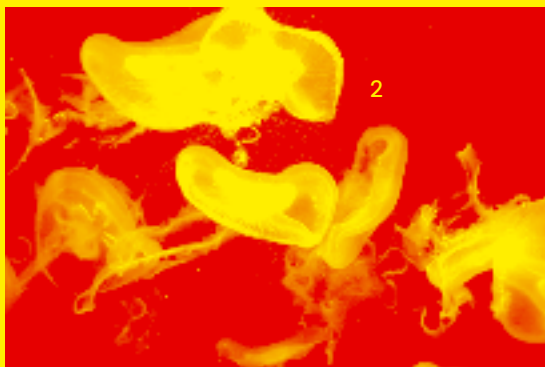
The film opens in outer space: a vortex draws in the drop *Myceaquia Vitae*, sucked into an irresistible fall towards the ocean. Composed of water, dark matter, fungus, and luciferin, it generates a living structure capable of transforming rock into fertile soil. Very quickly, the scale shifts. From the vastness of space, we plunge into the infinitesimal, becoming privileged witnesses of a mysterious cellular process in motion. There, oceans and volcanoes seem to converse to give birth to a world in perpetual transformation. The drop, suddenly endowed with feet, ends its journey under glass, subjected to examination—confronted with the fear of the unknown.

The sculpture *Luciferin Drop* embodies this evolution. Inspired by scientific experimentation, it blurs the boundaries between the real and the fictional to act as a point of condensation. It conjures a light within darkness—a metaphor for a creation that is elusive, yet active and persistent.

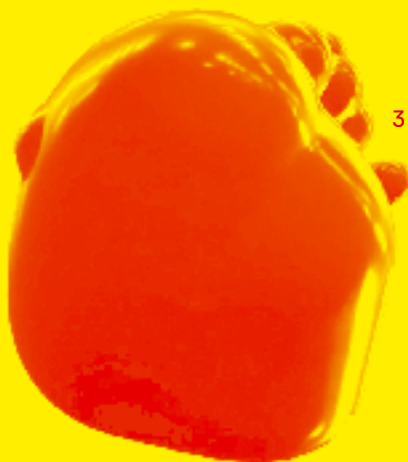
1 Mycetes
include fungi, yeasts, and molds. Their most discreet yet essential form is the mycelium. Invisible to the naked eye, it functions somewhat like an underground internet network, allowing plants to send chemical signals and fungi to absorb water and nutrients. It is one of the three elements contained in the drop of water, as if life could not emerge without transmission or communication.



2 Luciferin
is a molecule found in certain bioluminescent organisms such as fireflies or jellyfish. It generates its own light through a chemical reaction with oxygen. In the drop, this molecule from space becomes a form of intrinsic life, an energy pulsing through the ramifications of the living.



3 Dark matter
is a mysterious substance, undetectable directly, yet it makes up around 85% of the universe's mass. It can only be observed through its effects on visible matter—for example, the gravitational distortions it produces. As the final element contained in the drop, it endows it with its share of the unknown and the mysterious.



NORTH HALL

- *Algua Radiolaria #1 to #4*, 2021
- *Jengu — Mami Wata*, 2021
- *Djengu*, 2024
- *La sirène après la tempête*, 2024
- *Nommos*, 2024
- *ROOTS*, 2024
- *Siphonophore 1 and 2*, 2024
- *Souvenir de copépode*, 2024
- *Wisdom*, 2024

The metallic works presented here result from a residency at LVMH Métiers d'Art and a collaboration with the Franco-Portuguese manufacturer JADE. They required rethinking the practices of artisans, who until then had been accustomed to working on small-scale pieces. Each sculpture thus emerges from meticulous assembly, while colors and finishes demanded months of experimentation and prototyping.

Alongside them, five ceramic pieces establish a subtle dialogue between the fragility of earth and the solidity of metal. The ceramics seem to breathe—vulnerable and delicate—while the metal asserts its presence, rigid and protective. Together, softly luminous, they capture light like the surface of water, giving this underwater world a sensation of suspended movement and poetic intimacy.

Each of these creations is an iteration of hybrid beings, a mythical constellation navigating within an “ancient future.” Inspired by Drexciya and the mythologies of West and Central Africa, Josèfa Ntjam develops a chimeric universe by blending deities and water spirits with organic forms such as mangroves, octopuses, and micro-organisms.

1 **Mami Wata** (literally "Mother of Waters") is generally represented as a seductive woman, half-human, half-fish, associated with water, fertility, healing, prosperity, and spiritual protection. Also called Djengu in Central Africa, her myth, reinterpreted by the diasporas, has transformed over the course of population movements. Her presence can thus be traced in different parts of the world: La Sirène in Haiti, Madre de Aguas in Cuba, Manman Dio in Martinique and Guadeloupe, and Hoodoo in the southern United States.

2 In Dogon cosmogony, the **Nommos** are amphibian, hermaphroditic ancestral spirits. After creating the Earth, Amma gave birth to the Pale Fox, bearer of chaos. To restore order, Amma created the Nommos. Symbols of balance and divine speech, connected to water as a source of life, they taught humans arts, music, and culture, embodying wisdom and transmission.

3 Deep-sea animals, **siphonophores** form a colony of organisms called zooids. Physically connected and coordinated, they function together as a single entity. Through their multiplicity, they embody hybridity, collectivity, and shared intelligence.

4 A techno music group formed in Detroit (Michigan, USA) in the 1990s, **Drexciya** invented the legend of an underwater kingdom. Populated by the unborn children of enslaved Black women thrown into the sea because they were pregnant, it transforms these losses into mythological power by making water a space of rebirth.



CORRIDOR

• *Motion sickness*,
2025

At the heart of the exhibition, a breath suspends time. Hammocks stretched across the ground invite slow listening, while a moon floats, meeting the sun in an impossible astrophysical rendezvous. Its surface, assembled from NASA images, emits its own light: it radiates the sunset in a subtle inversion of roles.

Enveloping the zone, a slow and muffled soundtrack is punctuated by voices that rise. The artist's, of course, but also that of Dr. Thérèse Fouda retracing her genealogy; Whitney Houston recalling how she discovered Gospel before she even knew how to speak; Tupac explaining how hip-hop hardened in the 1990s through refusals and disillusionment; or Richard Bona, who in another form of expression, scatters his mesmerizing riffs... Each episode echoes the others, sketching a relationship to roots, transmission, and cultural heritage: plural in its expressions between continent and diasporas, yet similar in the experience of a shared belonging.

The installation thus establishes a poetics of connection between the intimate and the collective. Bodies, nestled in the craters, become modest receptors of a once-refused voice.

1 A trained pharmacist and the author of a dissertation, **Dr. Thérèse Fouda** (b. 1958) founded the Museum of the Peoples of the Central African Forest in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Today, as its curator, she works to preserve and promote the memory of forest cultures (Beti, Fang, Bulu, etc.). Her museum presents objects, reconstructions, and stories to bring these heritages to life.

2 The famous American singer **Whitney Houston** (1963–2012) discovered singing through gospel music even before she could read or speak, within the New Hope Baptist Church in Newark, New Jersey (USA). Her mother, Cissy Houston, directed the choir there. This first musical language shaped her powerful, soulful voice, which she carried into pop, soul, and R&B, making her one of the greatest artists of her time.

3 **Richard Bona** (1967) is a Cameroonian bassist, singer, and composer. He blends jazz, funk, and vernacular music. Known for his virtuoso playing and singing in Douala (a Bantu language spoken in Cameroon's coastal region), Richard Bona builds bridges between tradition and contemporary forms.

4 **Tupac Amaru Shakur** (1971–1996), known as 2Pac, is an icon of American rap. He used his music as a weapon against inequality, poverty, and social injustice, giving a voice to those forgotten in marginalized neighborhoods. A poet and committed actor, he embodies rebellion and cultural resistance. Murdered at just 25, he left behind ideas that still resonate, as in the excerpt revisited by Josèfa Ntjam, where Tupac explains the evolution of hip-hop in the 1990s. Starving and shut out of a room full of food, one first asks to be let in, then begs, until finally forced to break in. For Tupac, this path mirrors that of hip-hop, whose tone hardened in response to the silence of those in power. An heir to the struggles of the Black Panthers and the civil rights movement, his words still resound as a cry for unfinished justice.



HALL

#5

- *Underground Resistance*
– *Living Memories #1 to #4*, 2023
- *Ceremony #1 and #2*, 2024
- *FIRE NEXT TIME*, 2024
- *Guardian of the Ancestor's Echo*, 2025
- *Nsaku Ne Vunda*, 2025

Here lies another fundamental aspect of Josèfa Ntjam's practice: digital photomontage. Considered by the artist as a form of digital painting, it is composed of images—sometimes a hundred woven together—meticulously blended into one another until they form micro-organizations of vision.

These works interrogate the ways in which struggles and memories infiltrate our societies. Roots evoke clandestine networks of transmission, water embodies the underground circulation of ideas, while bodies inscribe past and present insurrections. These compositions connect scattered trajectories. The life of Nsaku Ne Vunda—first African ambassador sent to the Vatican by the King of Kongo to plead for the abolition of slavery in the 17th century—resonates with the demands of the Black Panthers, the uprisings of French suburbs, and images of segregation in the United States. Whether it is opposition to slavery, to police violence, or to racial discrimination, each movement manifests strategies of survival and solidarity against hegemonic systems.

Josèfa Ntjam composes a documentary fiction where temporalities and places intertwine. What unfolded yesterday in plantations or segregated neighborhoods answers what is being invented today in the margins. She maps invisible filiations, revealing the resonances—or intrications—between resistances.

1 In 2005, Zyed Benna and Bouna Traoré, chased by the police, were electrocuted in a power substation in Clichy-sous-Bois. Three weeks of **massive uprisings** followed. In 2023, Nahel Merzouk, 17, was killed by a police officer during a traffic stop in Nanterre. His death triggered a new wave of revolts. These two events, twenty years apart, reveal the same deep fractures: police violence, racial, social, and territorial discrimination, urban segregation, and the neglect of working-class neighborhoods.

↘ FIRE NEXT TIME

2 **The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense** was a revolutionary Black American movement. Founded in 1966 in Oakland, California (USA) by Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seale, and Elbert Howard, it emerged in a context of police violence and ongoing segregation. Its members organized armed patrols to monitor the police and protect Black communities. But the party also developed extensive social programs: free breakfast for children, community health clinics, and education initiatives. The image used by Josèfa Ntjam shows Elbert Howard during a conference in Amsterdam in January 1970.

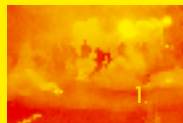
↘ FIRE NEXT TIME

3 Born in the 16th century on Mozambique Island, Yasuke was captured by slave traders while hunting a lion. He was sold to Jesuit missionary Alessandro Valignano, who brought him to Japan. Impressed by his stature and courage, Lord Oda Nobunaga took him into his service and made him a samurai — making him the first foreigner to receive this title. Today, the **samurai Yasuke** inspires Afrofuturist imaginaries as a symbol of emancipation.

↘ *Underground Resistance – Living Memories #3*

4 After the abolition of slavery in 1865, the former Confederate states in the southern United States put in place a system of laws and practices designed to keep Black populations in a position of social, political, and economic inferiority. The Jim Crow laws (late 19th century) enforced segregation between white and Black people in schools, transportation, and public spaces. Challenged by the civil rights movement, legal **segregation** came to an end with the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965. Some of the images used date back to this period.

↘ *Ceremony #1 and #2*



HALL

#6

• *matter gone wild*,
2023

Introduced earlier in the exhibition through the *Incubateurs de révolte [Incubators of Revolt]*, *matter gone wild* unfolds in a hallucinatory universe where entities confront systems of oppression. Orality and performance, so present in the artist's work, materialize through three avatars she embodies. Written to be heard, the text is close to rap: Josèfa Ntjam chants her words, modulates her sounds, and plays with diction to give voice to the singular temperaments of her characters.

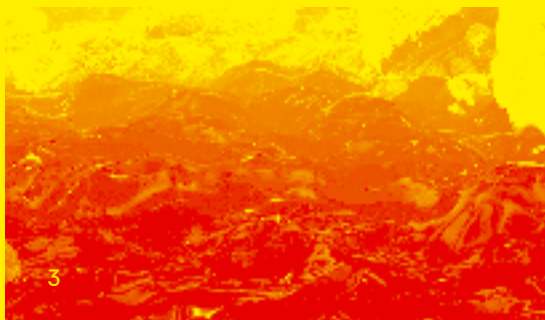
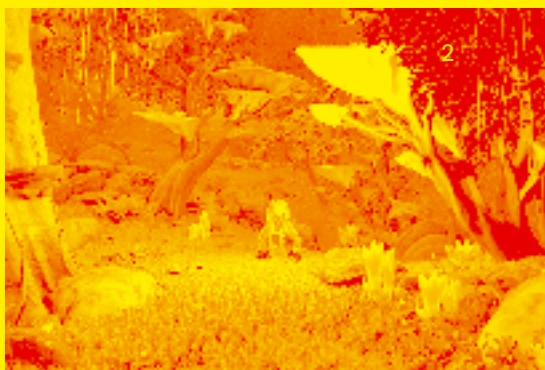
The Mixotroph, a hybrid plankton, half-plant, half-animal, symbolizes an insurgent nature. Marthe the Polyporous, the "chameleon of the forests," can metamorphose into a plant to better blend into the thickets and outwit the enemy. She reveals the link between nature and revolution, reminding us that the latter found in the former both shelter and strength to unfold. Saturna, Persona's twin, made of antimatter and pulsed by a black rage. A griot-rapper, she refuses the repetition of cycles of domination and calls for a radical rupture.

Through these avatars, *matter gone wild* embodies a protean form of protest. A meeting point between imagination and action, it does not merely represent struggle, it makes it vibrate.

1 A **polypore** is a fungus that grows on wood, often in a shelf-like or bulbous shape, with a porous underside and a tough texture. It plays a key role in decomposing wood, recycling nutrients, and maintaining the balance of forest ecosystems. In the film, Marthe the Polypore Woman has the power to transform forest waste into fertile soil.

2 In the 1950s, the Bassa **forests** of Cameroon served as a refuge for the UPC (Union of the Peoples of Cameroon) guerrilla fighters. A space of secrecy and survival, the forest also became a symbolic place — a repository of resistance, a matrix for oral storytelling, spiritual practices, and transmission of knowledge.

3 In Josèfa Ntjam's work, dark matter symbolizes everything that escapes our grasp but nonetheless structures the world in a fundamental way. The artist sees it as a metaphor for **blackness**: an invisible — or in this case invisibilized — power that profoundly transforms what surrounds it. The term blackness, positively reclaimed by the African American community since the early 20th century, has taken on an assertive dimension, symbolizing pride, resistance, and the affirmation of identity.



HALL

#7

- *Ectocarpus*
#1 and #2, 2023
- *bell hooks*
#1 and #2, 2024
- *The Deep* #1 to #3,
2024
- *FISH TANK*, 2024

Cells here are to be understood as animated hearths. They ally with bacteria to adopt their codes. Fluid and shifting, they propagate through contamination as if each were capable of transmitting and relaying inheritances. Between blood cells, jellyfish, fish, and mangrove roots converge the microscopic and the aquatic. They share the same power of action, the same capacity for circulation and transformation.

In hollow, Josèfa Ntjam celebrates icons and symbols. The Cameroonian independence ceremony enters into dialogue with a Black Panther leader; Angela Davis stands alongside bell hooks; and in this microscopic and aquatic universe, the lascars venture into new waters. Vectors of these images, liquid and cellular matter carry the empowerment of Black communities, honoring among other things their protective force, militancy, and feminism.

Within this alliance, the living becomes a moving archive. It embraces the richness of an identity that, even if it was sometimes forged in opposition to systems of violence, radiates through the strength and multiplicity of its forms.

1 **Bacteria** are microorganisms found everywhere on Earth — in the air, water, soil, and even inside our bodies. Invisible to the naked eye, they play an essential role in the cycles of life: most contribute to digestion, fermentation, the recycling of matter, and the balance of ecosystems.

↳ *The Deep* #1,
#2 and #3

2 The word "**lascar**", derived from the Persian lashkar ("army"), referred in the 19th century to indigenous soldiers and South Asian sailors enlisted by colonial powers (France, Portugal, United Kingdom). In France today, it evokes a diverse, often marginalized youth, embodying an ambivalent media figure — both stigmatized and celebrated. "Lascar" symbolizes the transgenerational legacy of colonized populations, the resistance to prejudice, and the capacity to reinvent oneself beyond the Western narrative.

↳ *The Deep* #2

3 The **jellyfish** is a marine animal with a gelatinous, almost transparent body made mostly of water. Lacking both skeleton and brain, it drifts with the currents while still being able to sting to defend itself or capture prey with its tentacles. Fragile yet formidable, the jellyfish embodies fluidity, metamorphosis, and the quiet power of marine life.

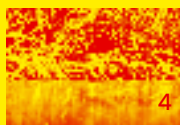
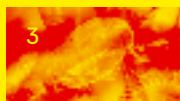
↳ *Ectocarpus* #1

4 **The mangrove** is an ecosystem found in tropical regions, formed by trees with aerial roots. Neither entirely aquatic nor fully terrestrial, it creates a space of ecological hybridity that shelters exceptional biodiversity. Mangroves play a vital role in protecting coastlines: despite harsh conditions (salty waters, unstable soils), they thrive and generate new habitats.

↳ *FISH TANK*

5 **bell hooks** (1952–2021) was an African American intellectual, activist, and writer. Her work addresses racism, sexism, class, and love as a lever for political transformation. She significantly contributed to Black feminism, which both exposed racial dynamics within feminist movements and theorized the existence of intersecting oppressions — sexist, racist, and class-based. Her thought remains a key reference for contemporary intersectional struggles.

↳ *bell hooks* #2



SOUTH HALL

- *Dattermitière*
#1 and #3, 2022
- *Mont Analogue*, 2022
- *Murail de corail*
#1 and #3, 2022
- *Medusa*, 2024
- *Mycelius*, 2024

Five sculptures transform natural inspirations into architectural cities: termite mounds become labyrinthine towns, clusters of dates become suspended quarters, and corals become organic fortresses. Each was built layer by layer using 3D ceramic printing. The material rises slowly, waiting for each layer to be solid enough to receive the next. Presented close to the ground, they rise into space like a multitude of earthen shelters.

Alongside them, the artist's face replaces that of the sphinx. It reaffirms a Black Egypt whose traces some sought to erase by breaking their noses. Around it, a morel gradually grows palms to move through water, while a jellyfish, floating and tentacular, transforms its appendages into hanging vines.

Earth and metal sculpt an arid landscape. Yet water, imperceptible at first glance, has never truly left these places. It is everywhere: in the soil, in the forms, in the textures. It shaped the matter and continues to live through it.

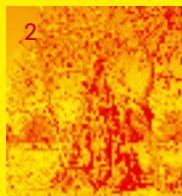
1 A profoundly communal organism, **coral** survives through the coordinated action of thousands of polyps. Each one contributes to building complex underwater architectures, providing shelter and food for countless species. In symbiosis with microscopic algae, these tiny beings together ensure the growth and survival of their habitat. Coral thus illustrates the strength of collective life and the balance of a shared ecosystem.

2 The termite is a social insect living in colonies, where each member has a precise role (workers, soldiers, reproducers) serving the collective. Small but powerful, these colonies work together to construct spectacular architectures: **termite mounds**. Rising from the earth as hills, towers, and labyrinths, they house the entire colony. In Cameroon, they sometimes form vast landscapes stretching to the horizon, bearing witness to the ingenuity and cooperation of these insects.

3 **Mount Analogue** is an unfinished novel by René Daumal (1908–1944), published posthumously in 1952. It tells the story of an imaginary expedition of a group seeking an invisible yet real mountain. To reach it, one must change perception, cross secret passages, and open up to other forms of reality. A spiritual and poetic metaphor, the narrative evokes the unattainable, transformation, and the importance of the collective.

4 The term “**Black Egypt**” refers to the idea that the ancient Egyptians were Black Africans. In 1954, Cheikh Anta Diop defended this thesis, drawing on anthropology, history, and linguistics to challenge Eurocentric representations of ancient Egypt. Reasserting these origins is not only about correcting history but also about valuing African identity, restoring cultural memory, and underlining the importance of the African continent in world civilization.

5 Pokémon, both animal and plant, **Bulbasaur** carries a bulb on its back that stores energy and blooms as it evolves. Inspired by a lizard and a bulb, Bulbasaur nourishes the work *Medusa*, which itself becomes a hybrid being. The jellyfish’s tentacles are inspired by its vines.



HALL

#8

• *swell of spæc(i)es*,
2024

swell of spæc(i)es was conceived at the invitation of the LAS Art Foundation and presented in the collateral program of the 60th Venice Biennale. Entirely realized in 3D animation, the work offers three viewing experiences. In the first, Fatima Al Qadiri's composition blends harp, cello, and digital instruments, weaving an enveloping and meditative atmosphere. The other two are carried by jellyfish made of plant-based bio-resin, whose voices extend the narration through poetic reflections on the living, the cosmos, and cycles of transformation.

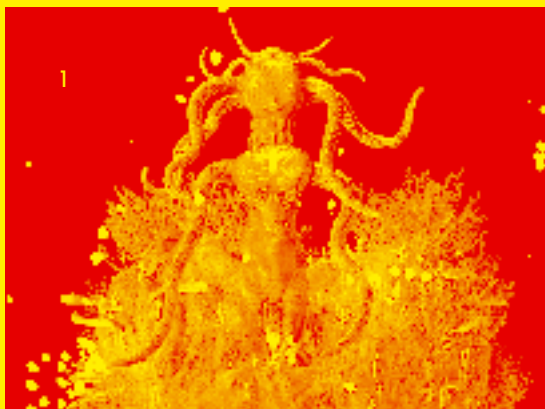
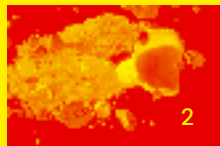
As in *Myceacqua Vitae*, science structures the imagination. On Earth, the skeletons of plankton, accumulated and fossilized, have inscribed oceanic memories in stone by shaping the limestone layers that raise cliffs and reliefs. This same limestone seems to exist in the debris of a distant planet. If plankton was its source on Earth, could it have existed there too? Josèfa Ntjam answers in the affirmative: carried by the celestial serpent and sent by Amma, it traversed space and time.

The work—without beginning or end—evolves forms and landscapes: seabeds turn into constellations, oceans into cosmic landscapes, and plankton, as the guiding thread of these transformations, links marine strata to stardust. Between memory and light, *swell of spæc(i)es* reminds us that, in the infinity of the universe, everything is connected.

1 In Dogon cosmogony, **Amma** is the creator god of the universe. He creates the Earth from primordial matter, often described as a kind of mud that comes from the sky. To organize the cosmos, he creates the stars and then throws them into the sky. These serve to structure time, regulate natural cycles, and maintain harmony between the sky and the Earth. Amma is also the parent of the Nommos, who are born from his union with the Earth.

2 An ambivalent figure, the **celestial serpent** links the Earth and the sky, the world of humans and that of the gods. Present in different mythologies around the world, it can be both creator and bringer of fertility, or destructive and chaotic. Among the Huaorani — an Indigenous people of the Amazonian region of Ecuador — it is said that the celestial serpent can devour the stars. One day, in its wake, as it burrowed into a hole in the Earth, a cedar tree sprang forth, followed by a vine. The vine, following the serpent's path, tied the treetop to the stars, thus binding the Earth to the sky.

3 A group of researchers has identified limestone in the debris of a former planet orbiting a white dwarf — the final stage in the life cycle of a medium-sized star. Formed mainly by the sedimentation of plankton skeletons and other marine organisms on Earth, its presence in space raises the question of the existence of water or conditions favorable to life in this vanished system. In *swell of spæc(l)es*, Josèfa Ntjam imagines this lost planet as an organic, luminous world — a true "**shell planet**." Its surface is shaped by fields of plankton, coral reefs, and clusters of shells.



HALL

#9

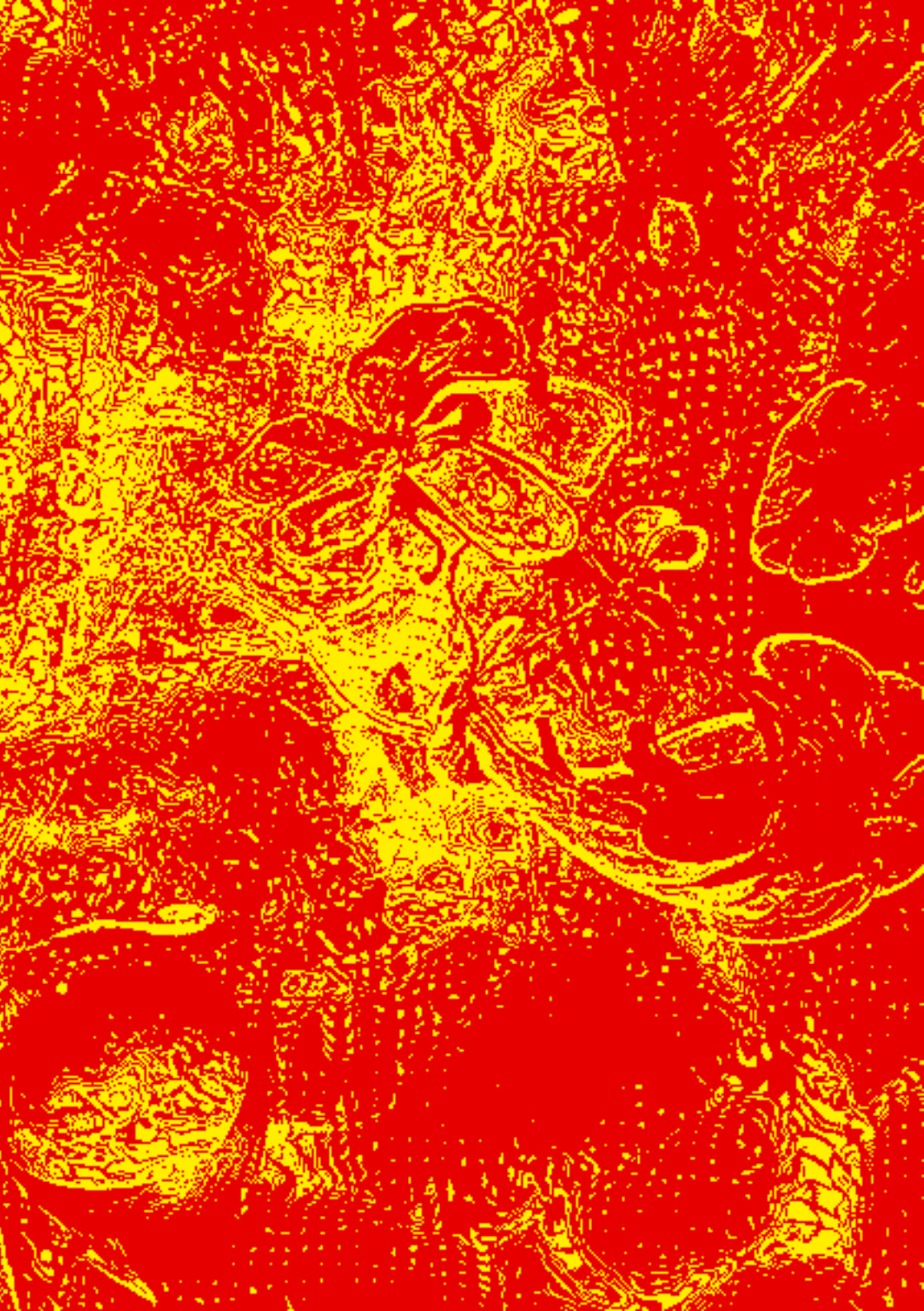
• *Dislocations*,
2022–2025

The choice of the video game here is anything but anecdotal. For a long time, digital universes, visual hybridizations, and logics of exploration have irrigated Josèfa Ntjam's work. Pushing this affinity to the point of making it an artwork seemed only natural.

In direct echo to the film *Dislocations*, this video game leads the player into the same matrix-cave. This setting then becomes a space of active exploration: new visual archives and sound fragments are revealed along the interactive path. One embodies Persona, whose quest for identity is replayed through the logic of the video game. For the time of a few clicks, each visitor can extend this search and open up new possibilities.

Both a tool of mediation and an autonomous artwork, *Dislocations* offers an experience of the artist's universe from within. It prolongs her reflection on diasporic memory and minoritized archives, while revealing how, in her work, the digital is not merely a support but a true matter to think with and to tell.





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Thibaut Royer

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Trainee

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PRACTICAL INFORMATION

OPENING HOURS

Wednesday to Friday
2 PM – 6 PM
Weekends
1 PM – 7 PM

MEDIATION PROGRAM

Weekend visits
Saturdays and Sundays
at 4 PM

Visits on the go
Fridays during lunch
break
October 17, November 21,
December 12
12:30 PM – 1:15 PM

Family visits
Sundays, November 23
and December 21
3:30 PM – 5 PM

Family Workshop
For ages 5–7
Wednesday, October 29
10 AM – 11:30 AM

Children's Workshop
For ages 7–10
Thursday, October 30
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Workshop
"Create your avatar!"
For ages 12 and up
Friday, October 31
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

BOOKSHOP

Specialized in
contemporary art, open
during exhibition hours

ASSOCIATED PROGRAM

Dive further into Josèfa
Ntjam's universe: discover
the accompanying
program on our website
and follow it on our social
media channels.

INFORMATION & RESERVATIONS

on the website:
www.i-ac.eu

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A
LES Amis
C



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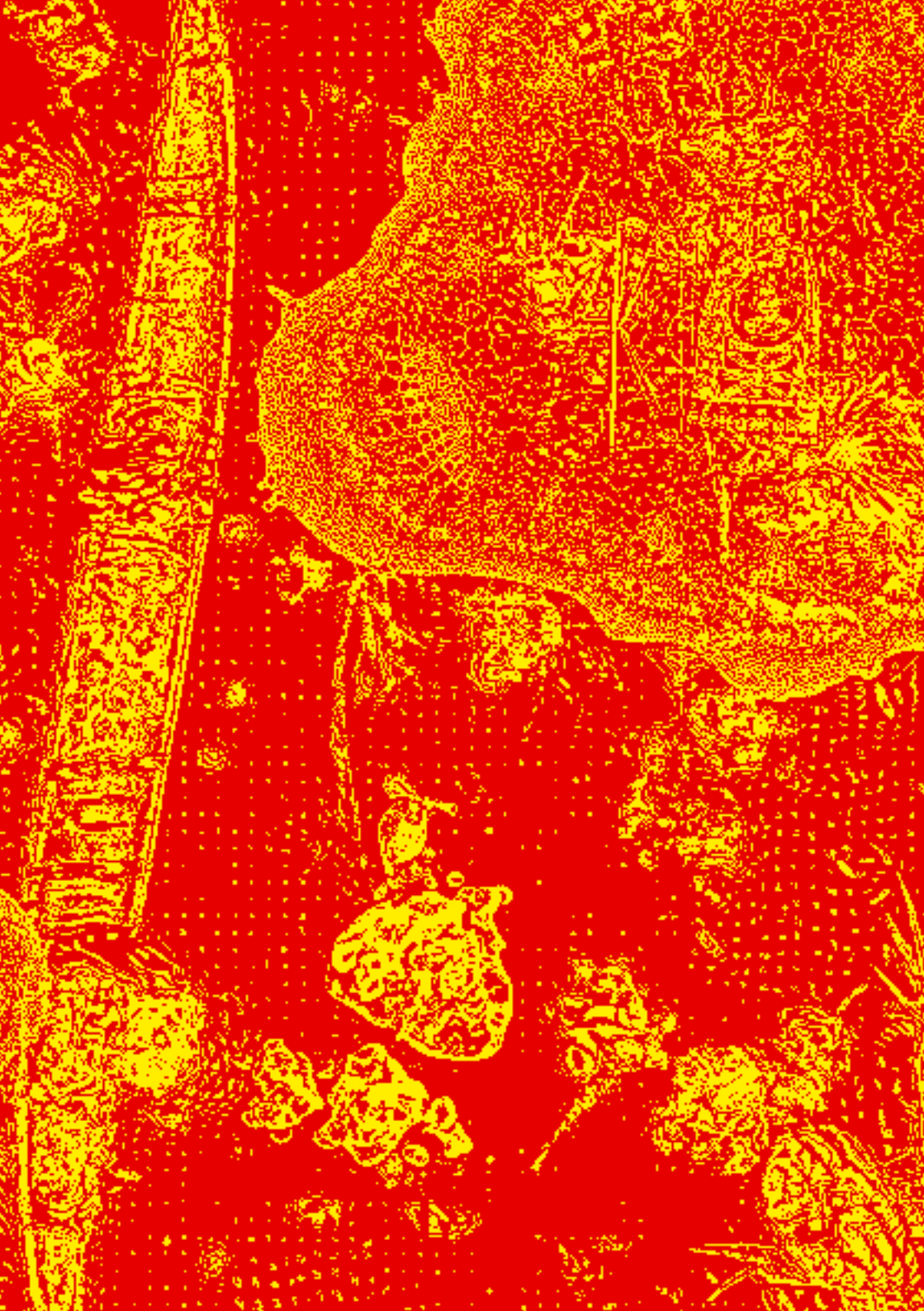
NEODKO
— design mural —



Vignemans
Ouvrages d'Art
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