



Visit renaissancesociety.org to view additional *Unthought Environments* video works by artists including Edgardo Aragon, Ursula Biemann, and Revital Cohen & Tuur Van Balen.

You'll also find there details of related public programs, including walk-throughs, talks by Keller Easterling and David Macauley, and a performance by Jana Winderen. All are free and open to the public.

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THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY

at the University of Chicago
5811 South Ellis Avenue
Cobb Hall, 4th Floor
Chicago, IL 60637

773 702 8670
info@renaissancesociety.org
renaissancesociety.org

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UNTHOUGHT ENVIRONMENTS

DANIEL G. BAIRD, MARISSA LEE BENEDICT,
NINA CANELL & ROBIN WATKINS, REVITAL COHEN & TUUR VAN BALEN,
CÉCILE B. EVANS, PETER FEND, FLORIAN GERMANN, JOCHEN LEMPERT,
NICHOLAS MANGAN, MILJOHN RUPERTO, XAVIERA SIMMONS

Start with the ancient elements—earth, water, fire, air—and then broaden your view of the elemental world. Think about sunlight, weather systems, rare earth minerals, and electromagnetic fields, to name only a few other natural phenomena. These things can be elusive, easily forgotten, or kept out of sight, even as they become the foundations of our virtual worlds, driving factors in geopolitics, or longer, deeper influences on human cultures.

The elemental world can seemingly be there to be used or overlooked, but it continues to shape us, too. Sometimes it veers into the foreground, leaving profound changes in its wake. *Unthought Environments* features new and recent works that offer different focal points in the elemental sphere as it intersects with our more human-made domains. The artists' sculptures, photographs, videos, digital images, and installations delve into subjects such as the control of water; the effects of the sun; the

mining operations that feed our computers; electric currents made visible; California dust storms; and other environmental forces.

From the growing effects of climate change to the extractive demands of global capital, among other realities of our age, the elements shadow much of what we do. Perhaps fittingly, *Unthought Environments* is informed by emerging discussions in a number of fields, including media studies, ecology, anthropology, and philosophy—some of which are presented in a series of public programs that run in parallel to the exhibition, and in a publication to follow. As recent work in these many areas suggests, the elements can offer a compelling frame of reference, perhaps a means to think differently about our environments, technologies, and infrastructure. One might ask, what are our unthought environments today?

Curated by Karsten Lund.

1. Nina Canell & Robin Watkins
Two Winged Pavilion, 2014/2018
FM sender, FM radio receivers, electrostatic field recordings
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Barbara Wien, Berlin

The artists create a dispersed acoustic environment within the exhibition, broadcasting their own electrostatic field recordings of midges and the magnetosphere to a set of FM radios.

2. Revital Cohen & Tuur Van Balen
Avant Tout, Discipline, 2017
Printed voile
Courtesy of the artists

Cohen & Van Balen used a game engine software to render photographs taken in a coltan mine in East Kivu, DR Congo: a remote and inaccessible site, where the materials that enable virtual spaces and distant connections are extracted.

3. Nina Canell
Halfway Between Opposite Ends, 2016
Wood stick, 3000 volts, salt, water
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Barbara Wien, Berlin

4. Daniel G. Baird
Meridian, 2018
Aluminum, 3M Privacy Screen, 3d rendering
Courtesy of the artist and PATRON, Chicago

Meridian contains the ocean’s horizon within a streamlined shell, a vast expanse in its own enclosed environment. The viewing surface is covered with a consumer-ready “privacy screen” in a standard size for a laptop.

5. Nina Canell
Interiors (Condensed), 2013
Drinking glass, coagulated air, floor carpet
Courtesy of the artist, Galerie Barbara Wien, Berlin, and Daniel Merzona, Berlin

What appears to be an ordinary drinking glass contains coagulated air, the invisible gas we breathe transformed here into a stable solid.

Jochen Lempert
6. *Untitled (Wind)*, 2015
7. *Cloud Cover*, 2013
Gelatin silver prints
All works courtesy of the artist and ProjecteSD, Barcelona

Lempert’s photographs take as their subjects various parts of the natural world, such as the subtle effects of wind and the movement of fire.

8. Florian Germann
emf / liquid state (electro magnetic field), 2016-2018
plexiglass, epoxyfiberglass, air compressor, mechanic, sensors, nuru algae gel
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Gregor Staiger, Zurich

Evoking electromagnetic fields and primordial forces, Germann creates a geyser-like form that responds to the presence of people around it. Viscous gel, made from algae, is connected to a compressor and sensors, a union of the organic and the technological, with its apparatus on display.

9. Xaviera Simmons
Velvet, 2018
Paint, wood
Courtesy of the artist and David Castillo Gallery, Miami

Xaviera Simmons’s text-based works echo handmade traditional street signage. They generate a kind of perceptual overload, where language produces a sensual sensory experience. Simmons uses a multitude of sources to construct these works, which she views as landscapes, narratives, images, and cinematic expressions, informed by poetic strategies, film theory, and photography.

10. Miljohn Ruperto
Re-animating “Valley Turbulence” by Sam Chase, 2015
Video loop
Courtesy of Koenig & Clinton, New York

Animating a photograph from 1977, Ruperto brings back to life a massive dust storm in California’s San Joaquin Valley. The endless video loop lends the storm a slow force and perhaps a sense of time different than our own.

11. Peter Fend
Über die Grenze: May Not Be Seen Or Read Or Done, 2012
Collage (color laserjet copies, b/w laserjet copies, magazine pages, maps), colored pencil, ink and architectural tape on paper; excerpts from a set of 12 panels.
Courtesy of Essex Street, New York

Looking beyond the boundaries of art, Peter Fend develops large-scale plans to address the environment’s decline, whether he’s focusing on alternate energy sources or the dynamics of rivers and oceans. The collages here offer a partial catalogue of Fend’s ambitious ideas, while calling out the individuals and institutions that have stymied them.

12. Revital Cohen & Tuur Van Balen
B/NdAlTaAu, 2015
Neodymium, aluminium, gold, tantalum
Courtesy of the artists

An artificial mineral “mined” out an array of cracked-open hard drives that yielded small amounts of metals like neodymium, gold, and tantalum. *B/NdAlTaAu* and *Avant Tout, Discipline*, also on view, are part of a set of works by Cohen and Van Balen that delve into the realities and perceptions of coltan mining in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the ways it interconnects with other places and times.

13. Marissa Lee Benedict
points from five shade clouds (Ivanhoe, Elysian, Upper Stone Canyon, LA Reservoir, Las Virgenes), 2018
Modified zinc-plated security fencing, carbon black HDPE shade balls, molded PET plastic, water
Courtesy of the artist.

Inspired by research in California and Israel, Benedict adapts and transmutes key materials of water containment, including a tall security fence. Tracing the industry’s global supply chain, Benedict also imported two materials from China: black “shade balls” that float on the surface of reservoirs to prevent evaporation, and blue plastic “preforms,” that the artist pressure molded into bulging forms, mimicking the process used to mass-produce water bottles. Her own distorted bottles then become a set of close condensation chambers.

Research and travel support provided by the Hyde Park Art Center’s Jackman Goldwasser Residency program for international exchange and Artport Tel Aviv.

14. Cecile B. Evans
Something tactical is coming, 2018
Scale model, wood, carved hand, 3D prints, paper, paint, fogger machine, Makibes screens, Raspberry Pis
Courtesy of the artist.

Evans’s scale model of an office in a progressive housing estate doubles as a shooting set for a fictional TV show, titled *Amos’s World*, which weighs attempts to control an environment and uncontrollable variables (weather, other people). On the back side, a shooting script is paired with videos that echo rushes or screen tests, introduce characters such as Amos, a vainglorious architect, and The Weather, ever a strong presence.

Produced with additional support from Glasgow International; Chateau Shatto; Emanuel Layr Galerie; and Mattes & Miniatures, London.

15. Nina Canell & Robin Watkins
Near Here (1 Microsecond), 2014
Photocopying toner, nylon, perspex, 1,000,000 volts during 1 microsecond
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Barbara Wien, Berlin

This work registers powerful forces using humble materials. A 1,000,000 volt current has passed through commonplace photocopy toner, leaving the powerful hint of a lightning strike.

16, 17. Nicholas Mangan
Ancient Lights (Brilliant Errors), 2015
Photographic prints on corkboard with pins, wood frame and acrylic
Courtesy of the artist and Labor, Mexico City

Part of a larger project titled *Ancient Lights*, Mangan’s collages mimic a bulletin board, as if mapping out a set of provisional thoughts or connections. Exploring the energy-giving properties of the sun, the project gathers different image sources: glimpses of a solar plant in Spain; tree-rings in research lab; and Russian biophysicist Alexander Tchijevsky’s charts that correlate sun spot activity with significant human events, including revolutions and migrations.