JULIE HYUNKYUNG CHEON

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Julie Hyunkyung Cheon is a researching wayfarer.

For them, travel is not mere movement but a way to explore the world and time. Amid movement and drift, at thresholds and encounters, they collect traces of sensation and memory and—through processes of research and translation—present them in new forms.

Their journey reflects how humans live on Earth. We all pass through a brief span, perpetually wavering and in motion. Cheon renders this condition in a sensory and metaphorical language, seeking to reveal the often-forgotten temporality of nature and the layered structures of memory.

Like the sea's tides and the process of fermentation, Cheon's work creates meaning through cycles and transformation. Materials are not simply substances; they become records—witnesses to time. Crossing sensation with philosophy, memory with nature, Cheon reopens the question of how we relate to the world.

Ultimately, what Cheon draws is a map. Yet it is not a map that simply points the way, but a navigational chart that discloses the relations and temporalities of an unseen world. As a researching wayfarer, Cheon weaves fragments of sensation, time, memory, and the world to propose possibilities for new understanding.

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OBSCURED RECORDER; Color record

Exhibition at the DDW 2025 with BioartLab (Symbiocene)

Obscured Record; Color Record (DDW) is a material archive that translates what the sea keeps out of sight into ceramics. Rocks surfaced at Zandmotor—iron oxides and industrial slag once buried in North Sea strata—are collected, studied, and reformulated into clay and glaze. Across twelve Moon Jars, “Fermented Time of the North Sea” layers lunar rhythm, cultural time, and geologic deep time, where surface color and the interior void act as an old clock. In “Blue Bone,” high firing reveals an unexpected blue in fish bones, a heat-activated trace that may relate to accumulated metals and the Anthropocene’s residue. Together, the works propose a sensorial literacy: reading hidden conditions through crystal, translucency, subtle runs, and a spectrum of blues.

Category; Exhibition, Presentation

Color Record 01: Fermented Time of the North Sea

The Zandmotor near The Hague is an artificial coast made by pumping sand from the North Sea seabed. In that process, buried rocks, iron oxides, and industrial slag surfaced. These materials hold long strata of time—from when Dogger Bank was land during the Ice Age to the present.
The artist collected and studied them, then turned them into clay and glaze. Fragments of the North Sea's terrain move onto the vessel's surface and into its hollow, giving shape to time that was unseen.

This work adopts the form of the Moon Jar. Its round body evokes the moon and its cycle—the source of the name. In Korea, it is a vessel for storage and fermentation. In some regions, people buried jars to foster natural fermentation, making it a medium where nature's time and human culture meet.

In "Color Record: Fermented Time of the North Sea," the Moon Jar plays two roles: a surface that reveals the colors held in stone, and a void that contains time. Using twelve Moon Jars glazed by iron oxides from North Sea strata, the artist layers three scales of time: the lunar cycle, human culture aligned with nature, and the sea's geologic deep time. This "old clock" renders vast time—once outside our senses—through surface color and the interior void.

Fermented Time of the North Sea translates the North Sea's geologic history into material aesthetics. Once land in the Ice Age, its seabed has cycled through weathering, erosion, and deposition, along with micro-events like iron oxidation and recrystallization. The set of twelve gestures toward a longer lunar recurrence rather than a single calendar year. By practicing how to "leaf through" color, texture, and form, we learn to receive nature, terrain, and time in multiple ways. Here, hidden time becomes visible as subtle runs and crystals, and as a space that holds its breath.

Color Record 02: Blue Bone

"Color Record: Blue Bone" was born of serendipity: While researching how to make bone china from fish bones, the artist found that bones turned blue when fired at high temperature. It first seemed like a mistake, but repeated tests confirmed the change was consistent. The study expanded to bones collected by region, species, and body size, recording slight shifts in tone and intensity. The likely cause is heavy metals accumulated in bone—copper, iron, manganese. The main drivers are thought to include marine pollution, habitat differences, and metal-rich aquaculture feed. All are closely tied to human industry. We call this era the Anthropocene. Importantly, these accumulations and differences are almost invisible in daily life. Only specific thermal treatment (high firing) makes the "blue bone" appear.

The artist translates this hidden information into a "language of materials." Fish bones are refined into ash and added to clay bodies and glazes. Phosphates and trace metals in the ash promote crystal growth or shift the base color in the glaze. The resulting blue is not mere decoration; it is evidence of a record moving from inside matter to the surface. By crystallizing glazes, adjusting small additions to the clay, and tuning the firing curve, the artist draws out fine differences in color. Experiments accumulate like data, and the results are arranged as a spectrum of blues—at times close to greenish patina, at times deep like celadon glaze, and in some samples merging with opalescence to form an "icy" skin.

"Blue Bone" is less a warning than a proposal for literacy through the senses. It braids scientific analysis with craft-based making, translating data into the language of surface and crystal. As we leaf through these translated surfaces, we learn to read the sea—and the scale of human activity—in a new way. In the end, the project shows how materials hold memory, and how we might learn to read it. When the invisible appears as blue, as crystal, as a thin skin of glaze, questions follow:

Where did this color come from? What have we left in the ocean? And how will we answer?

01

OBSCURED RECORDER; Fishbone glaze & Fishbone china

An Artistic Apparatus for Collecting the Time and Materiality of the Sea : by-product from fish

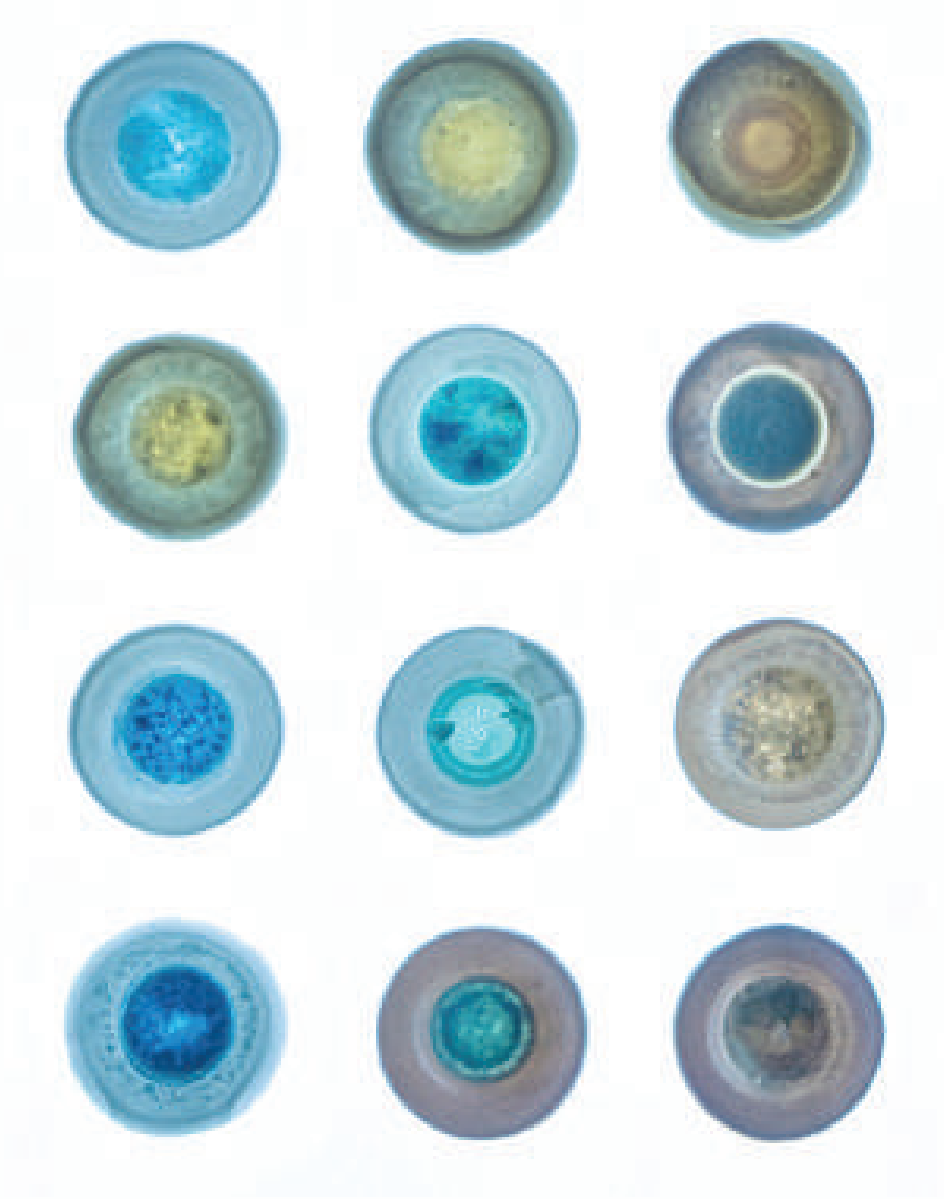
This project investigates the temporal layers and environmental traces embedded in materials collected from the North sea (Europe) & East sea(Asia) —such as oxidized rocks, fish bones, and seaweed.
It develops artistic “recording devices” that sensorially reveal the hidden accumulation of change in the sea.
Centered around the questions “How is natural time inscribed in matter? And how can we perceive and share it?”, the project integrates scientific material analysis with experimental object-making.
Through workshops, exhibitions, and publication(TBD), it invites the public to engage with marine time—even within everyday life far from the sea.
These sensorial tools aim to connect environmental awareness with artistic practice, offering a new language of sustainability through art

Category; Research project

Since 2023, Julie Hyunkyung Cheon has been based in The Hague and has focused on translating the temporal and ecological shifts embedded in natural materials—such as rocks, fish bones, and seaweed—collected from East Asian and Northern European coasts. The material transformations observed (e.g., the blue coloration of fish bones during high-temperature firing, oxidation patterns in iron-rich rocks, and seaweed's thermal and chromatic changes) serve as sensory evidence of marine pollution, climate change, and industrial remnants.

This project builds on that foundation and deepens the research within a Dutch context. Through site-specific fieldwork and integrated scientific verification, the project aims to uncover new materials and hidden narratives. These will be transformed into sensory objects and instrumental devices that invite viewers' physical and emotional participation. As a country facing complex challenges such as sea level rise, coastal development, and marine conservation, the Netherlands provides a meaningful backdrop where artistic approaches can propose new languages of perception and reconciliation.

I have observed that certain fish bones turn blue when fired at high temperatures during the process of making fish bones into ash for ceramic research on fish bones. This is related to the chemical reaction of certain heavy metals, similar to the process of making glaze, and is thought to be related to the increase in heavy metal accumulation in the fishbones.



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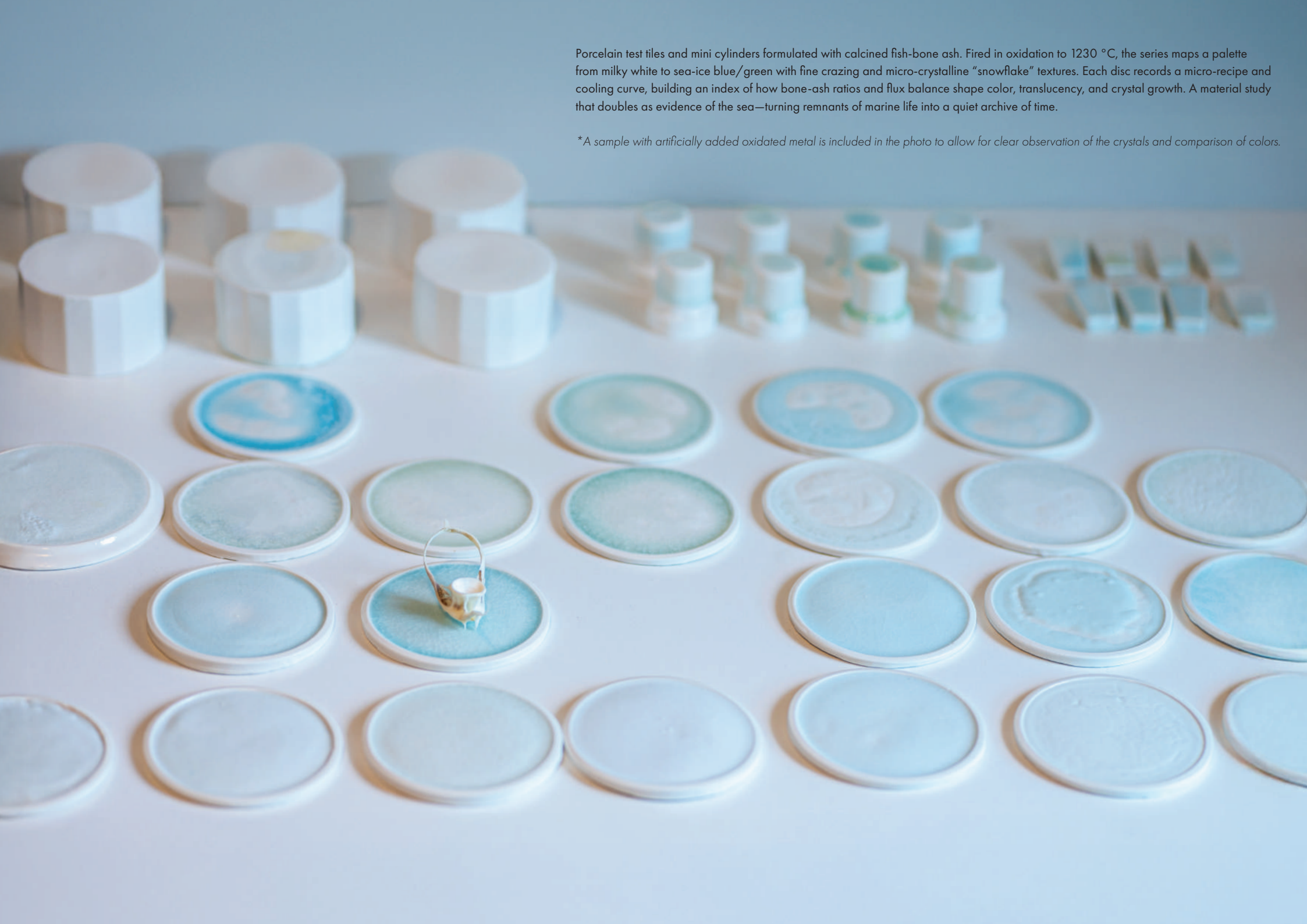
The tiles shown successfully transferred the color of fish bones suspected of containing metal oxides.
*[*The photos include numerous samples with artificially added minerals to clearly observe the crystals and compare their colors.]*



Porcelain test tiles and mini cylinders formulated with calcined fish-bone ash. Fired in oxidation to 1230 °C, the series maps a palette from milky white to sea-ice blue/green with fine crazing and micro-crystalline "snowflake" textures. Each disc records a micro-recipe and cooling curve, building an index of how bone-ash ratios and flux balance shape color, translucency, and crystal growth. A material study that doubles as evidence of the sea—turning remnants of marine life into a quiet archive of time.

**A sample with artificially added oxidated metal is included in the photo to allow for clear observation of the crystals and comparison of colors.*

Description the present work for DDW (WIP)

This plate is crafted from fish bone china made by refining and firing the actual bones of cod, turbot and more fish from the North sea. Their skeletal forms are cast into the surface like delicate fossil impressions—shaped by absence rather than presence. These voids are filled with a custom blue crystal glaze formulated from fish bone ash, which reacts in the kiln to form subtle crystalline structures.

The blue hue emerges not merely as aesthetic, but as the result of trace heavy metals accumulated within the bones during the fish's life in contaminated waters. When fired at high temperatures, these elements become chemically active, transforming into a visible residue of invisible pollution.

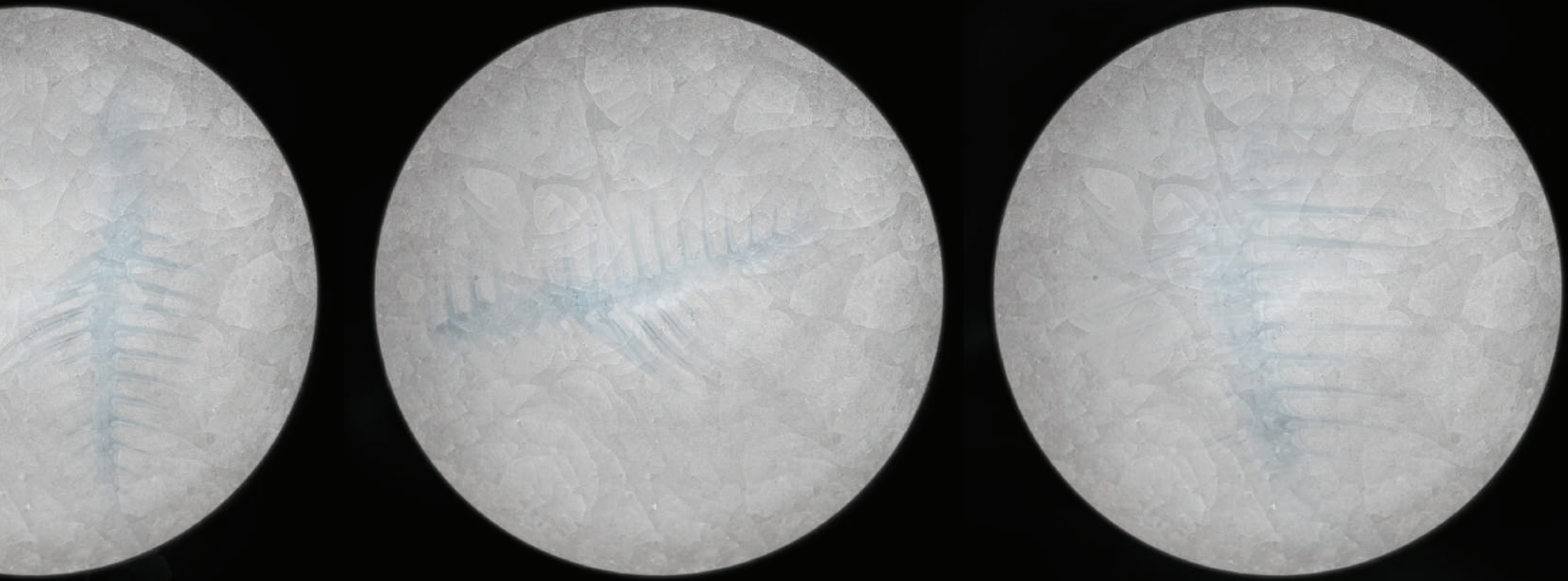
A final layer of translucent crystal glaze (called Kuan) veils the surface, allowing the blue forms to appear as faint shadows beneath a misted water.

This piece serves as a memorial to consumed life, a poetic record of ecological degradation, and a silent witness rendered through matter, color, and loss.

Material: Fish bone china cast from fish bones; filled with blue fishbone glaze and finished with Kuan-style (crystalize) translucent glaze

Dimensions : 300 mm(D) x 25 mm (H)

Number of object : 3 pieces

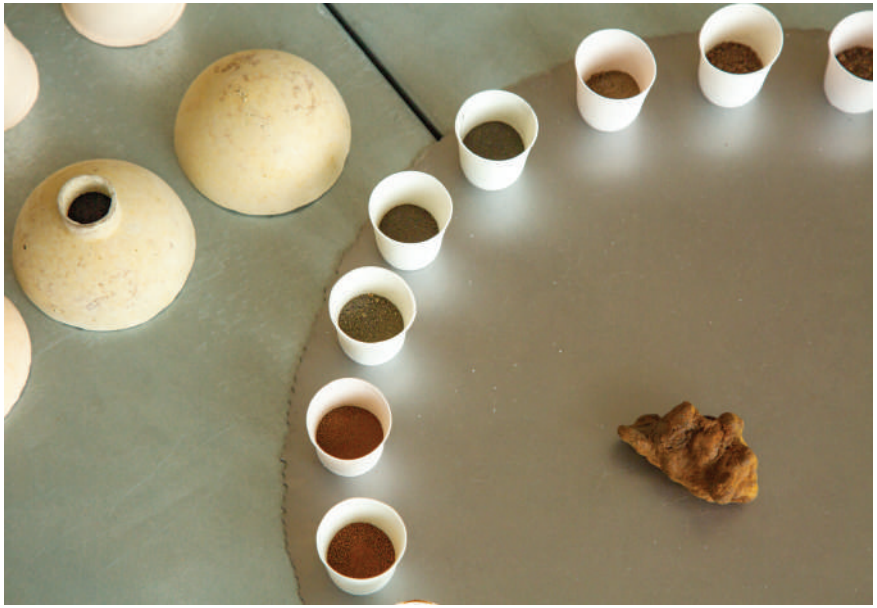


2. Time of the Northsea / Color record (ONGOING)

An Artistic Apparatus for Collecting the Time and Materiality of the Sea

This study transforms field-collected seafloor rocks into the language of material science and sensation. Ground rock serves both as a principal glaze raw material and as a clay modifier, yielding a spectrum of greys, sea-greens, and light blues, with finishes from glossy to satin-matte, subtle crazing, and snow-like micro-crystals. Even with the same rock, shifts in recipe and cooling curve alter color, translucency, and crystal growth; each specimen functions as evidence of those changes. When blended into clay bodies, the additions produce warm grey-blue tones and natural speckling, evoking stratigraphic traces. Assembled together, the series organizes fragments from the sea into an archivable surface dataset, establishing the material foundation for future map-tiles and objects.

Category; Research project

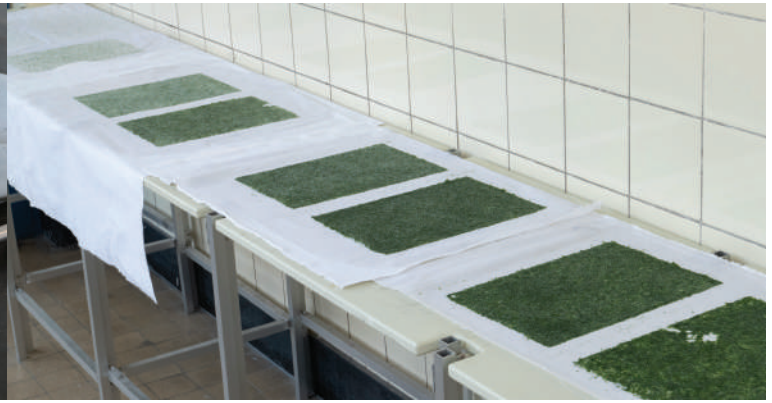


I have been collecting rocks during a year of coastal research, focusing on the North Sea of Europe and the East Sea of Asia, and have been conducting research on the chronology of iron oxide and the history of the sea, especially based on rocks related to the North Sea. As a result, I discovered that the color of iron oxide is related to the time when the area was formed, and I am in the process of visualizing this more clearly.

Process Record_ How to work with material_Northsea project

An Artistic Apparatus for Collecting the Time and Materiality of the Sea

A year of field research, collecting, and experimentation toward the sea - Photographs; This is part of a visual record of fieldwork, collection, material analysis, and experimental procedures in six countries, including the North Sea and the East Sea. Most of this has been documented on film, and the film is being edited and published, with further publications to follow.



Title

SCENTSCAPE

Date	Location
Fab - May 2022	Natherland

Production

Testing Tools, Archive Booklet, Film

'Scentscape' is a work about the Dutch peatland and its memories, which have been continuously changing for hundreds of years.
I connect the forgotten landscape and the present through the sense of smell, which is most closely related to memory.

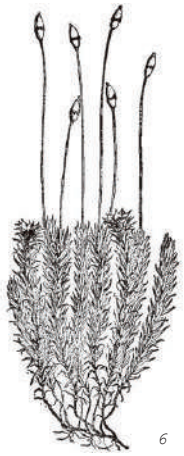
Contribute

100%

1-4

I have a passion for whisky and Some whiskeys have a peat Flavour. Hundreds of years a go, the land in the Netherlands was covered with peat. Nowadays, only 8 percent of the land contains peat, and previous peatland, including Amsterdam, The Hague, and Rotterdam, do not show any trace of those former peatlands.

My journey with peat leads me to discover these forgotten landscapes, memories, and some of the clues that are still there, deeply hidden.
I research dutch history, culture, people, and the traces of peat that are still left, the process of them forming and disappearing, connecting them, and conveying back to the scents I find.
Scent is the oldest and instinctive sense in our brain annd it is the most closely connected to memory.
I explore the dutch landscape through scent, and I communicate with you how it feels.



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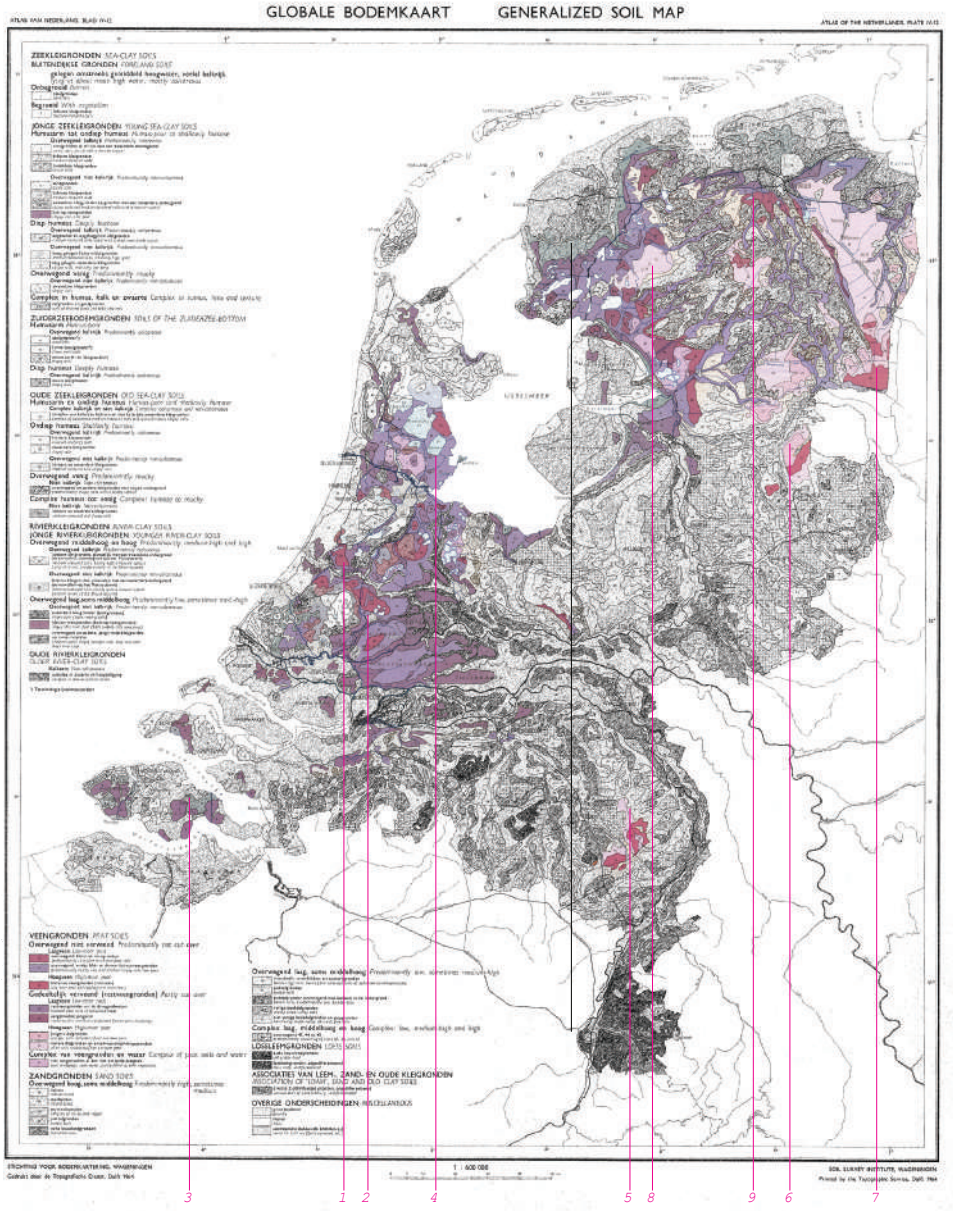
1-4. The process of flavoring whiskey with peat, Laphroaic/Scotland
5. Peat mining in the Netherlands
6. 'Sphagnum moss', Main ingredient of peat
7. Peatlands in the Netherlands, Groningen University



1. Leishendam
2. Gouda
3. Zeeland
4. Zaandam

5. De Grote Peel
   Maria Peel
6. Almelo
7. Emmen

8. Drachten
9. Groningen

1

2

3

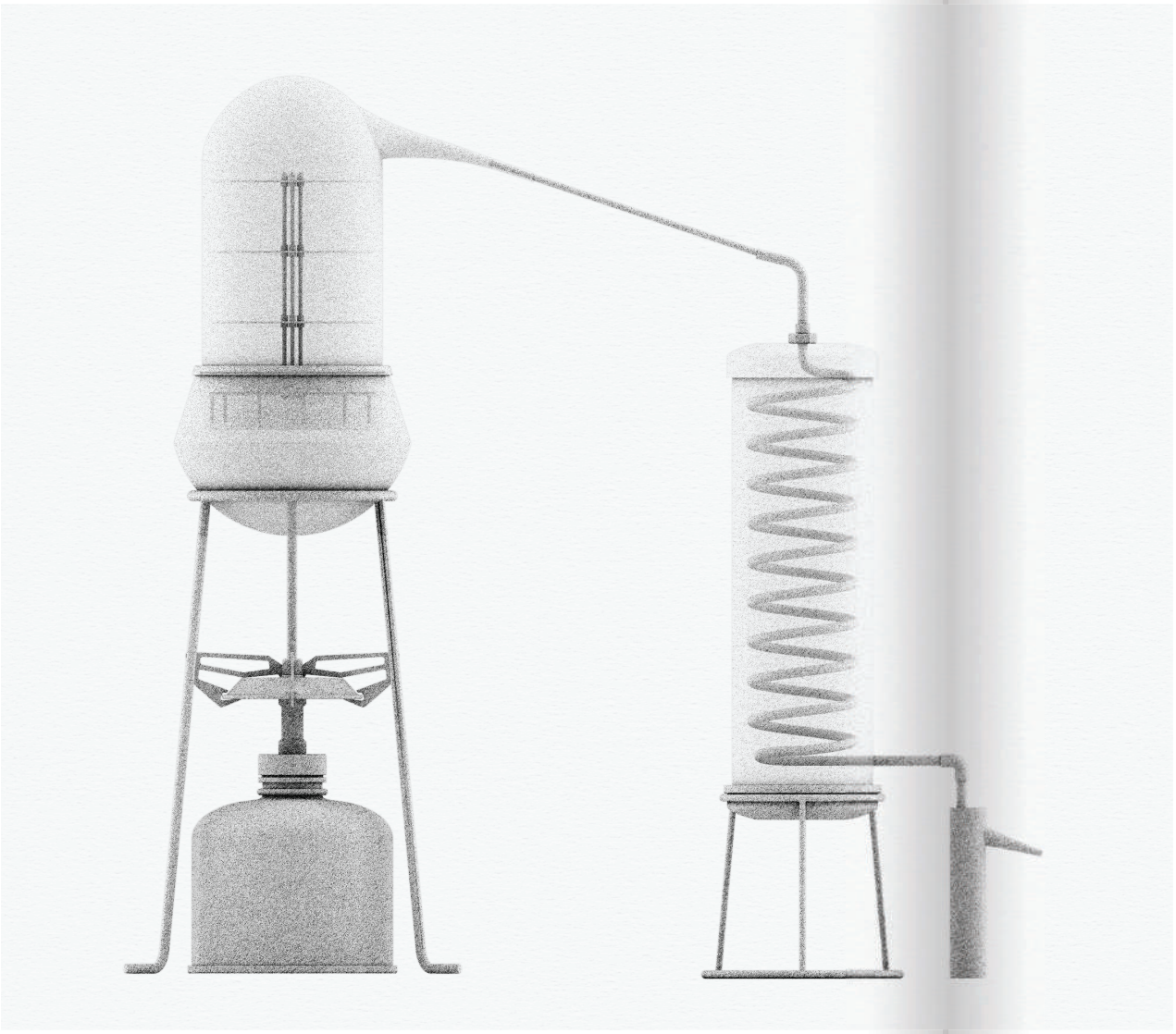
1. Drilling into the ground, De Grote Peel
2. Investigating and collecting information about landscape, De Grote Peel
3. Peat collecting process, Almelo

Map of Memory - Process Film of Research of 'Scentscape', 12:39

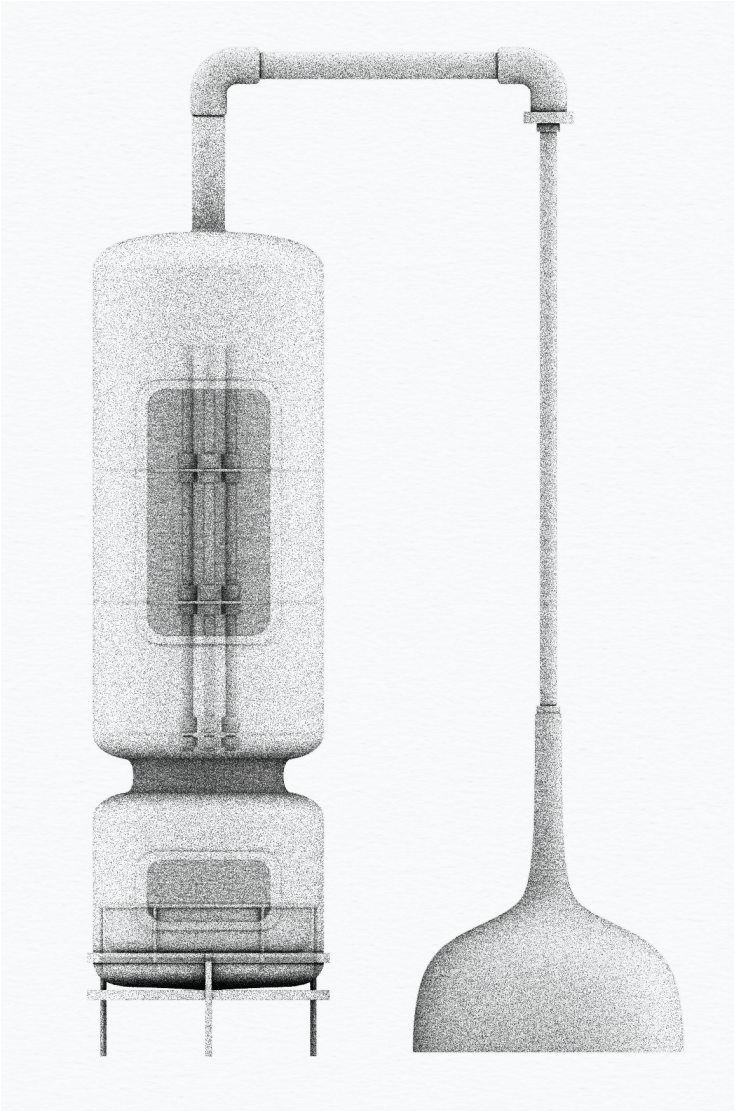
De Groote Peel, 1M Drilling

Peat; 0 - 30 cm

PEAT INSIDE ANALYSIS



I designed distillation and smoking tools to extract the aroma from the collected peat and the plants that make up it. It was designed in a small size that could be put on the desk for quick experiment, and made a modeling with 3d program for export CAD plan and 3d print (prototype)



Left. Distillation Tools Design / Right. Smoking Machine Design
3D modeling process (Rhino & photoshop)

1

2

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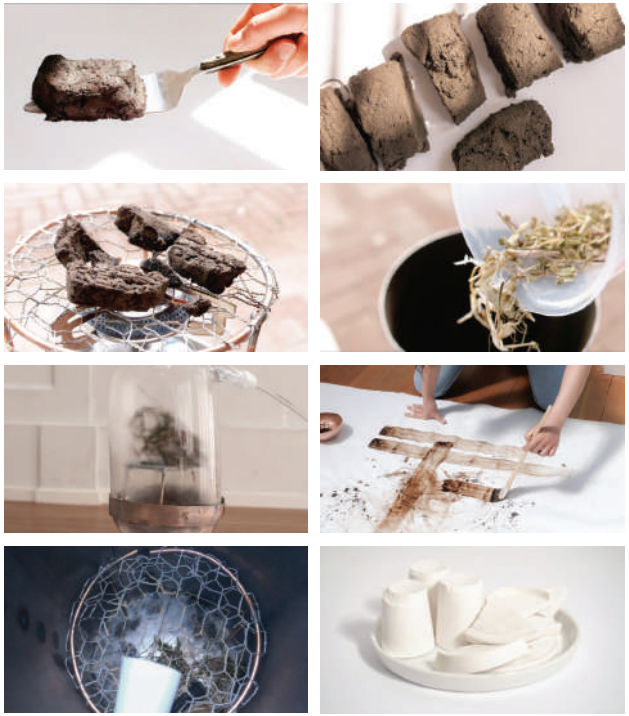

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I designed distillation and smoking tools to extract the aroma from the collected peat and the plants that make up it. Through it, I experimented with various versions and transferred the extracted incense to the plaster.

1-2. The process of extracting fragrance from plants
3. Various materior for scent & essense
4. 'Scentscape'_process film, 03:18

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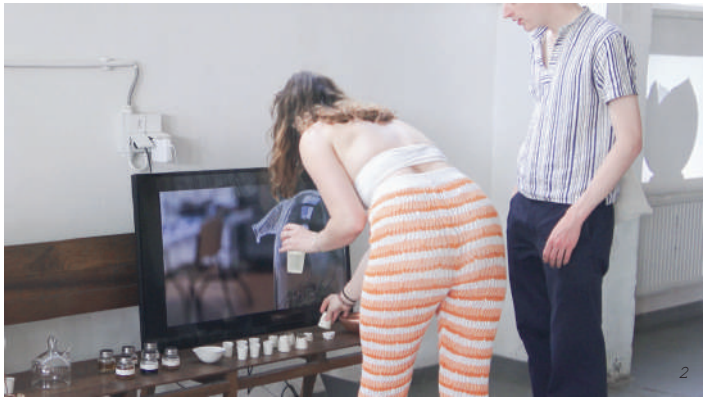
1. Peat and plants of various landscape in Netherland
2,4. Plaster with the fragrance of each landscape
3. Cup of 'Scentscape'



With this work, I participated in 'Nothing makes itself', a group exhibition related to material research at De Besturing in The Hague. I installed the process film and the collected materials together, and also exhibited the whiskey cups containing the incense so that people can experience the incense.

1,2. Overview of exhibition
3. Essense, cup, Scent plaster
4. Collection of Peat

Title

Fermentation of Emotion

Date	Location
AUG - OCT 2022	Natherland

Production

Ceramic work, Film For Exhibition

A person's inner feelings and thoughts are so intense and wild at the time that it is difficult for even oneself to understand or accept them. This work is a story about listening to and exploring our inner voice through the metaphor of fermentation.

Contribute

100%

1

2

For me, fermentation starts with something breaking down.
The big and small shocks of life leave ripples on me and cause change. Yeast is a trigger and causes fermentation, and the process of breaking and changing my thoughts and emotions is similar.
I was inspired by pottery and the series of processes in which pottery is made and failed, and converted these somewhat abstract processes into installation work.

1,2. Cycle, broken pieces of porcelain
3,4. weight of time, mixed media

3

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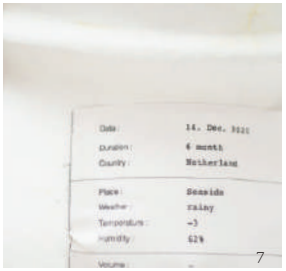
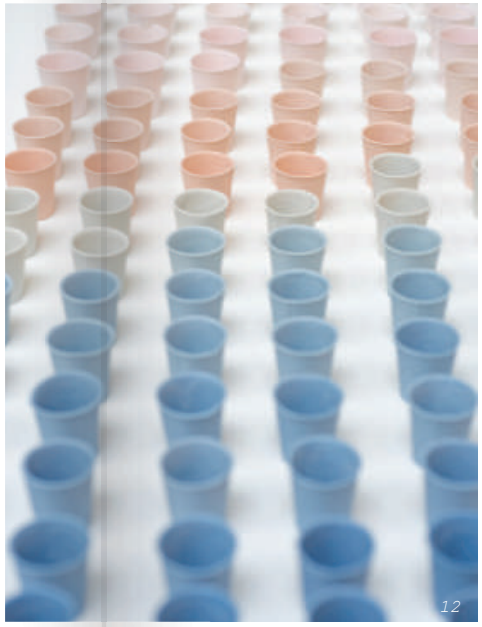
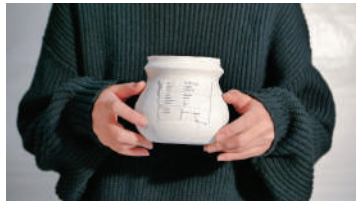




Fermentation and maturation are the power of time.
Can we see the shape of time?
Through this process, our wild and intense emotions, memories and thoughts are blended and matured into something we can accept.
I expressed this process as a process of mixing different contrasting colors over time.

5. Overview of 'Shape of time'
6,7. fermentation of emotions, Porcelain
8. Test Sample of mixing color on the mold, porcelain bisque
9-11. color surface work of Container, porcelain bisque
12. wiskey cup series, porcelain













Left. begin of fermentation, the sound of time_video, 02:18
Right. Memory of fermentation, temperature of time_ video, 04:05