



Arboroscene: reflections on decay is the result of a long and intimate contemplation of a dying apple tree. The title reflects on an alternative way to look at things: de-linking ourselves from our human centric interpretation of life we live by today.

The title reveals different levels of comprehension. *Arboroscene* is ambiguous by its written polyvalence and thus calls into question our own cosmovision. The era we currently live in has been described as the Anthropocene: an interval in which human impact and existence take the forefront in the universe. Playing with the latin root of the word tree—*arbor*—*Arboroscene* is a change of perspective: how would we perceive our environment if we decentred ourselves and contemplated the tree as an axis, rotating and impacting its surroundings?

On a local level, *Arboroscene* refers to a particular *scene* the artist witnessed over a year, observing the ill apple tree in her garden decaying over time. Along the pages, the scene multiplies into micro-moments of its dying process.

The choice of photography as a medium reveals itself vital to the whole process of its framing and fragmentation. The artist reconstructs the movement of the tree through growth, decay and metamorphosis, visible with the change from summer to autumn. Movement is not, therefore, confined to locomotion but a transformation over time. The word *plant* itself, as revealed by Michael Marder, can either enclose its immovability—as it is chained to the ground through its roots—or reinforce the idea of a movable being over time¹.

Joana Patrão is not forcing ownership or a human voice on the tree, but cherishes the state of co-existence with nature as a dignified being. Just like a self-contained scene, we experience a piece of the tree’s life and metamorphosis towards death within its own organizational system. This eco-aesthetic approach “tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community”².

The artist does not create out of the tree, she takes on the role of a mediator between human and non human. The devitalised tree is the source of the artistic vision, impacting both the non-linear format of the book and the rhythm of time and continuity.

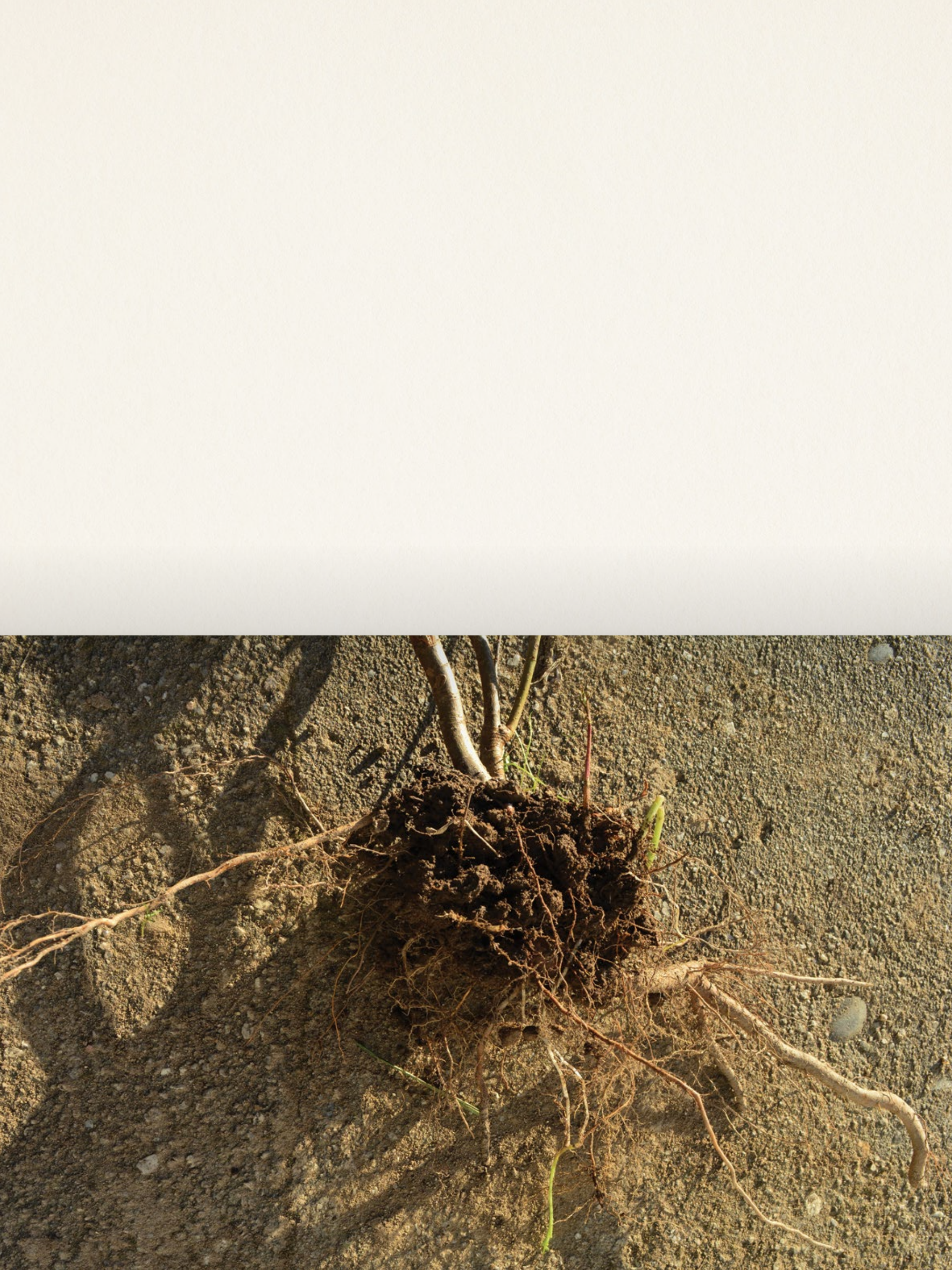
As we turn, unfold and refold the pages of this book-exhibition, Joana Patrão reveals an inter-connection between artist and tree. Her handwritten visual poetry seems to echo her personal gestures towards the tree whilst following its natural wooden lines.

As viewers and readers, we witness the tree’s experience of life inwards through illness and death as well as outwards through its environment. This natural and artistic spectacle opens up a new understanding of a decaying and cosmic existence, both alternative and similar to our own.

1 Marder, Michael. (2015).
“The Place of Plants:
Spatiality, Movement,
Growth”. *Performance
Philosophy*. 1. 185. 10.21476/
PP.2015.1128.

2 Leopold, Aldo. (2014).
“The Land Ethic”. *The
Ecological Design and Plan-
ning Reader*. Island Press/
Center for Resource
Economics

*Arboroscene:
reflections on decay*





its
branches become
dormant

The standing tree still
moves

and the shadow of
vitality
in the
fruits

While
its
branches become
dormant





Under the bright Summer Sun
I see the trunk becoming
darker from inside
burning slowly

I witness the arrival of Autumn





I touch
the
acid taste
deformation;
cleaning & glowing
stuck impossible
holes made by the disease
I see the

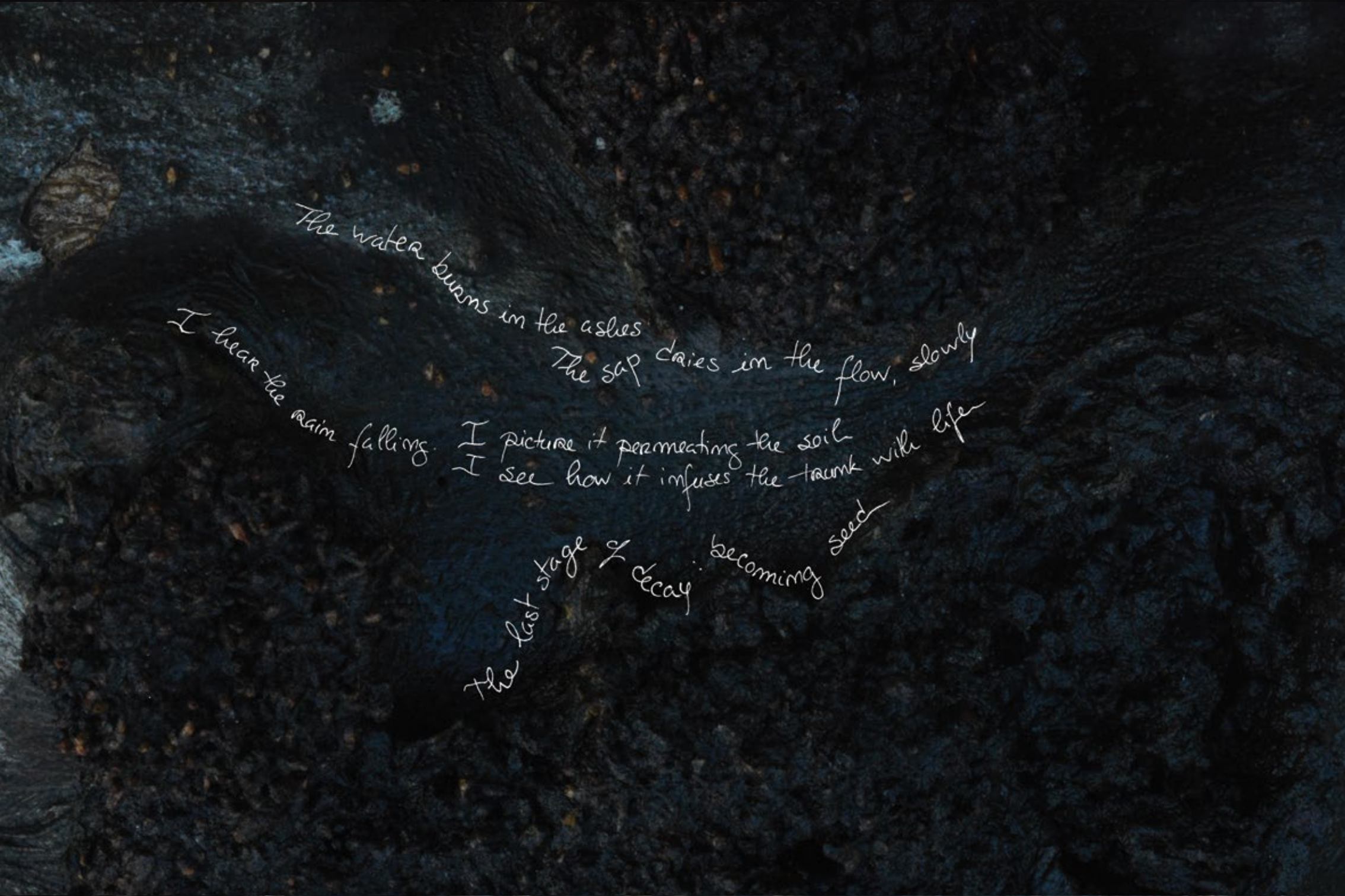
I realize that every line in the tree comes from an aggregation of other beings as from a reaction to them. Aggression from its own growth, from pruning, from heat and frost carries the violence of a wound.











COLOPHON

ARTIST

Joana Patrão

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JOANA PATRÃO

(b. 1992, BARCELOS)

Joana Patrão is a visual artist based in Porto. Her work revolves around Landscape, recognizing it both as a consequence of the conflict nature-culture and as a process for potential reunion. As part of this research, she obtained her M.A. degree in Painting by the School of Fine Arts of the University of Porto with the project “*Landscape as experience. Sea: Immersion and Voyage*” (2016). As an Erasmus+ fellow she attended the Aalto University, Finland where she was selected for the international workshop *Adaptations – Utö. Site, Stories and Sensory Methods*, HIAP, on the island of Utö.

She has been exhibiting her artwork since 2013. Among her most recent exhibitions, a special mention to the solo: *Sea of salt, salt of the earth* (2020), curated by Luísa Santos, at Lab Box, Art Curator Grid, Lisbon; *Natural drawing. The water flows in the line* (2019), Lugar do Desenho, Fundação Júlio Resende, Gondomar and *Becoming: meditations* (2020), curated by Maria Eduarda Duarte as part of the series of online exhibitions *4 + 4 proposals for making sense of today’s convivial cultures* at 4Cs.

The Fold(s)

The Fold(s) is a curatorial project composed of four books operating as four individual exhibitions. Under the artistic direction of Luísa Santos, *The Fold(s)* was developed in the context of the Seminar in Curatorship by the MA and PhD students in Culture Studies of The Lisbon Consortium, Faculty of Human Sciences, Universidade Católica Portuguesa.

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4Cs - From Conflict to Conviviality
through Creativity and Culture



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