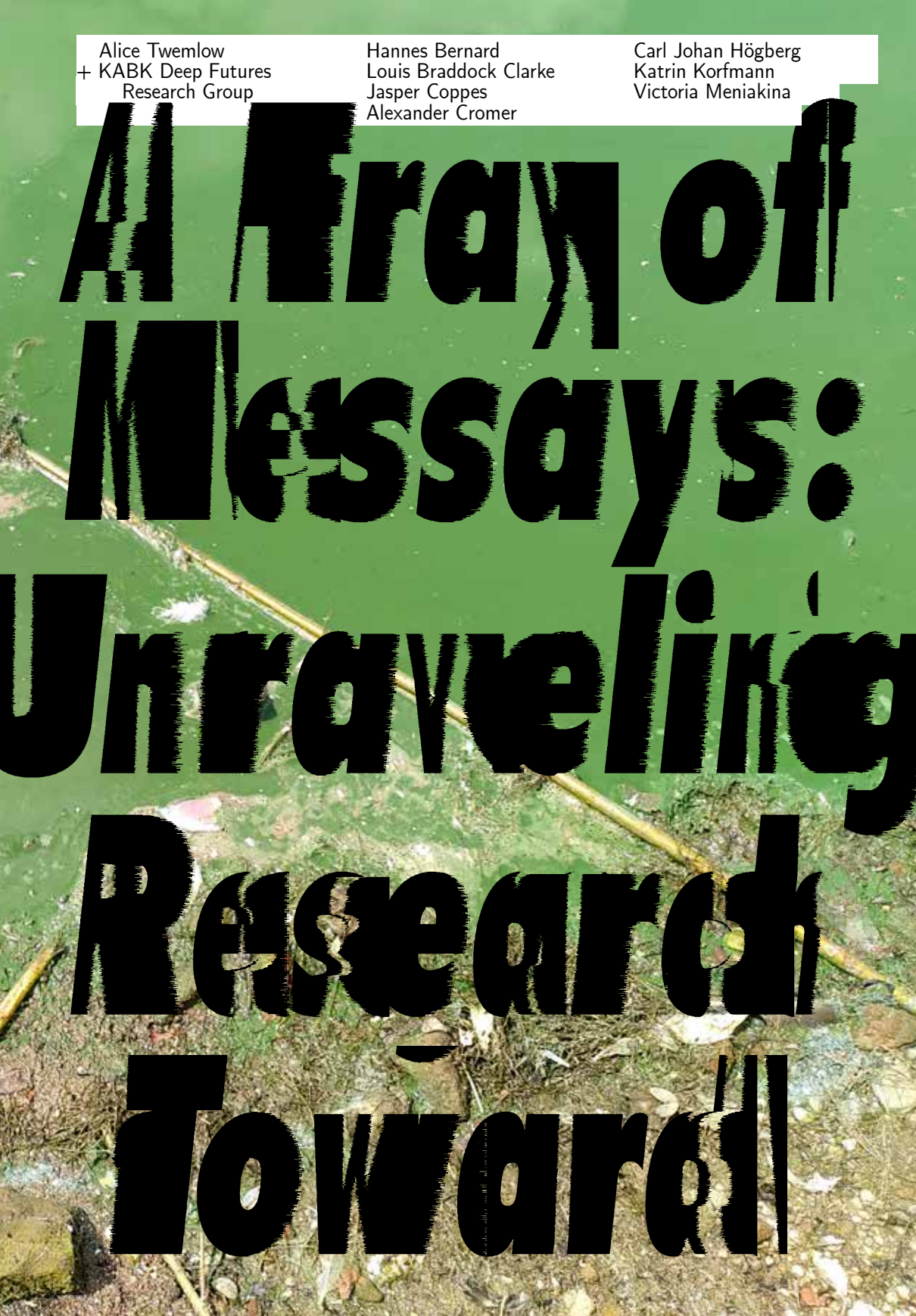
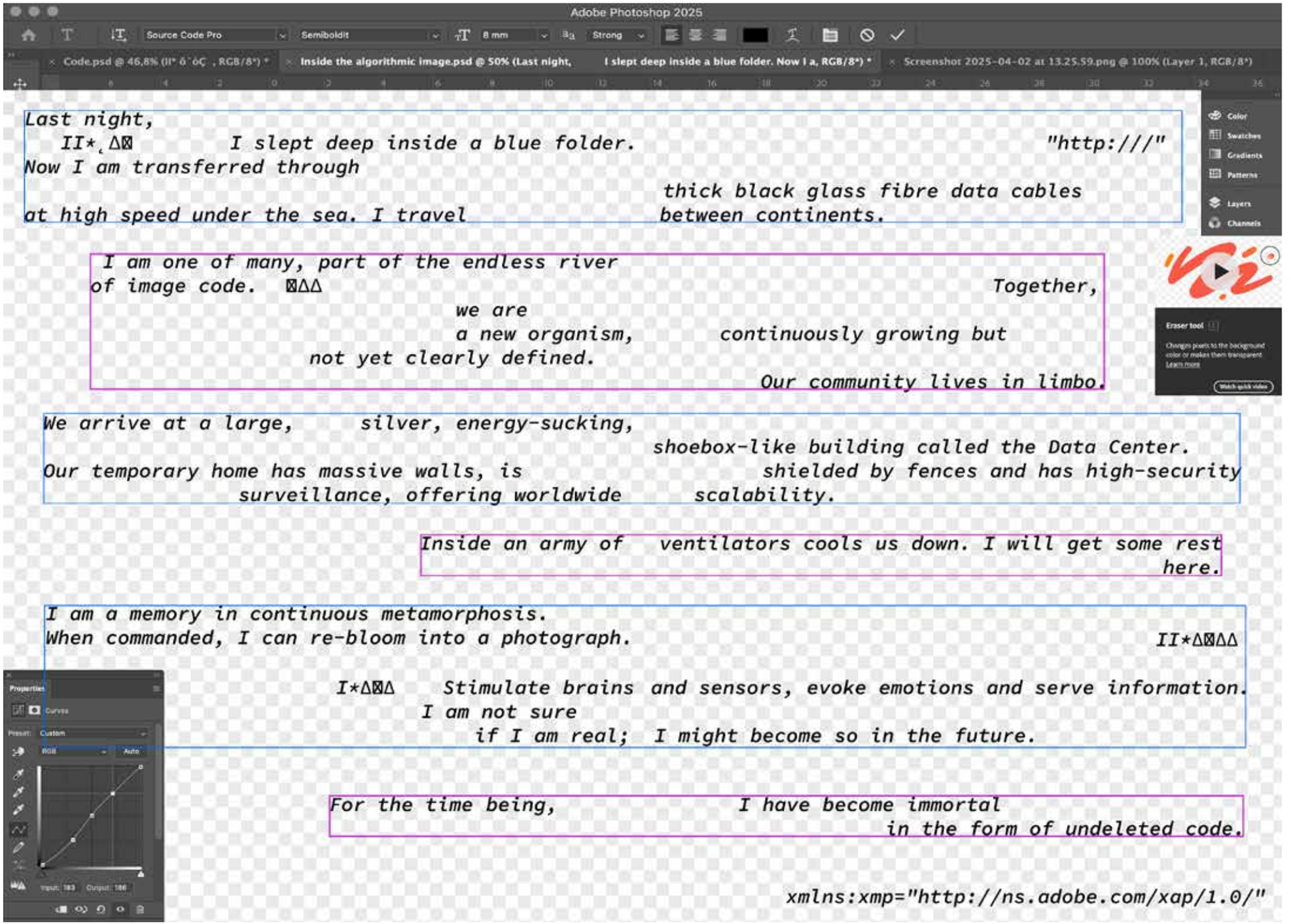
Alice Twemlow
+ KABK Deep Futures
Research Group
Hannes Bernard
Louis Braddock Clarke
Jasper Coppes
Alexander Cromer
Carl Johan Högberg
Katrin Korfmann
Victoria Meniakina

A Fray of Messays: Unraveling Research Toward



A Fray of Messays:
Unraveling Research Toward the Deep Future

Alice Twemlow
+ KABK Deep Futures Research Group
Hannes Bernard
Louis Braddock Clarke
Jasper Coppes
Alexander Cromer
Carl Johan Högberg
Katrin Korfmann
Victoria Meniakina



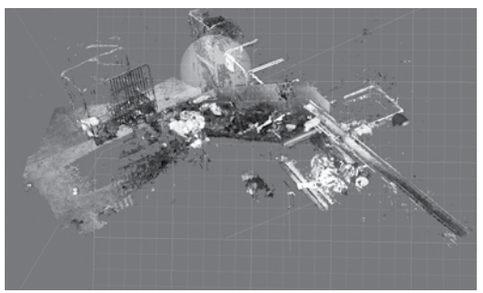
Katrin's site of research: *Inside the Algrorithmic Picture*, Katrin Korfmann 2025.

Whether my practice resists conventional boundaries—between research and making, graphic design and media art, input and output—or whether I'm simply a lazy researcher producing more debris from digital waste doesn't matter all that much to me. It's the intuitive, messy and extremely inefficient process that I enjoy. It allows me to navigate social complexity, surf algorithmic waves, prune cultural landscapes and invent inarticulate, weirdly affecting, forms of expression from shit that's floating all around us.

KATRIN KORFMANN

I created a set of ten experiments with which to test the contents of a folder of image trash left over from a recent artwork *Fast Fashion, Wastescapes*. The folder contained 467 RAW files (files that contain the image data exactly as captured on a camera's sensor. Any adjustments or settings that might have been applied are appended to a version of that image file. The original always retains the same data).

My aim in these experiments was to find out if processing and transforming my own photographic waste could make it into relevant material for my artistic practice.



EXPERIMENT 2

Aim:
To build a 3D photo model of my image trash
Input:
467 RAW files
Size of input:
11.9 GB
Tool:
Photogrammetry software (Agisoft Metashape)
Method:
Feed the programme by uploading my 467 image files and process the images according to the programme's manual
Duration:
5 hours processing time
Output:
1 dense point cloud (set of data points representing the detailed geometry of a specific object or environment)
Size of output:
18.2 MB

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS
The outcome is a rendered scene created by the programme, in which it imagined and envisioned the original place where the source images were taken. Although it appears to be able to create a glitchy model of a space, the scene does not look at all like the original location.

As the programme was fed with my image trash rather than images specifically taken to **compose** a 3D model, I think it got confused. In this aspect, the programme works in the same way that I do, as an artist; it gives an interpretation or suggestion of a scene rather than trying to imitate or document reality.

Photogrammetry functions as a remote sensing technique that measures information from the 2D data in photographs, and reconstructs it as 3D models. The programme is a form of inverted mapping that starts with images.

An unforeseen but interesting discovery is that the programme deletes all traces of humans depicted in the images.

EXPERIMENT 5

Aim:
To visualise all my combined image trash as code
Input:
467 RAW files
Size of input:
11.9 GB
Tool:
TextEdit
Method:
Visualising code, hacking technical limitations
Output:
4,983,244 virtual A4 pages and a JPEG picture
Size of output:
1.8 MB

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS:
Every digital image is made up of code. Opening an image in a word processing software such as TextEdit reveals the image's digital skeleton. I want to see the digital skeletons of all my trash files, combined.

However, the endless lines of symbols result in an enormous file size.

Neither my powerful computer, nor the several experts I ask for help, can process the data. To work around these technical limitations and to get an idea of the amount of code, I look at the data in the form of a print preview of A4 pages.

If I print the code of only 1 of my 467 image files, I'll get 10,469 A4 pages.
If I print the code of all 467, I'll end up with 4,983,244 A4 pages.

I decide not to press 'print'.

EXPERIMENT 7

Aim:
To interpret a glitchy picture with the help of a computer programme
Input:
JPEG (image outcome from *Experiment 1)*
Size of input:
2.2 MB (reduced from a 535.9 MB PSD file)
Tools:
Computer Vision Explorer—a browser-based application that provides AI-generated computer vision tools (e.g. image recognition and classification, image generation and captioning); and Visual Question Answering—a tool that can respond with an answer to a natural language question about the contents of an image.
Method:
Use the image created in *Experiment 1* and process it through these tools
Output:
Captioned image and **conversation transcript**
Size of output:
Unknown (browser-based analysis)

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS
I ask the Visual Question Answering tool to decide if my image is a work of art. The answer is: 'YES 100%'.

Next, I type the question: 'So, you like my image?' The programme's answer is crystal clear: '100% NO'.

I am happy to get such a strong opinion even though I have no idea about what the software's criteria are. Another function of the software is that it can detect objects within an image. Object detection models are typically trained and evaluated on the MS-COCO dataset which has 80 object categories.

When I feed the programme with my image, it seems to confuse the system. It finds 'persons', 'bottles' and 'umbrellas', even though none of these are present in the image.

As Daniel Chàvez Heras—an academic and technologist specialised in the computational production and the analysis of visual culture—has observed, 'machine learning is emotionally captivating not because the machinery is intelligent or creative, but

because it is spectacular, and in this, the way we consume imagery created through these techniques today has much more in common with stage performances in the early twentieth century, with the cinema of attractions, and particularly with magic'.[17]

There is an excitement that comes with playing around with these programmes. What makes their visual outcomes—namely a graphic display full of flaws as the programme attempts to categorise and label the glitchy picture—so fascinating is that I do not understand the process leading to them.

EXPERIMENT 8

Aim:
Bending / To turn my image code into a performance
Input:
First page of the coded outcome of *Experiment 5*
Size of input:
2 KB
Tool:
VINCI AI Presenter—a software that generates surreal avatars by using real actors as source material and programming their performance with text input. This allowed me to create my own AI performer who reads my code symbols aloud, taking the form of a professional-looking video presenter.
Method:
Feed the software with the first page of my 4,983,244-A4-page document containing image trash code, generated in *Experiment 5*
Duration:
2 seconds (of processing)
Size of output:
Unknown (browser-based moving image)

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS

The software analyses the code language of my RAW photo data and classifies it as being French. My avatar performed and read aloud the code of my image debris. This results in an absurd audiovisual act. I am stunned by the outcome. The professional appearance and sincerity of the programmed actor, along with the incomprehensibility of her pronounced words—the language of computer code, in French—embodies the exact challenge that I have been facing during my experiments: the state of being lost in translation.

17. Daniel Chàvez Heras, 'Spectacular Machinery and Encrypted Spectatorship', in *APRJA*, Volume 8 (1), 2019, 173.

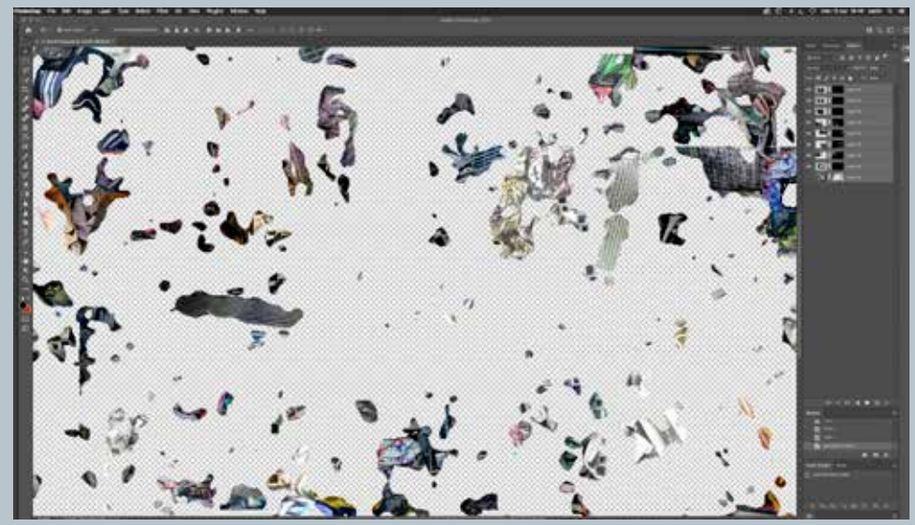
EXPERIMENT 10

Aim:
To provoke the rotting of my image trash through fermentation
Input:
Digital photogrammetry data (dense point cloud), output from *Experiment 2*
Size of input:
25 x 10 x 6 cm
Tools:
3D printer; Alpha Natural biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHA) filament—PHA is created through fermentation. Bacteria, when fed natural sugars and oils, create 'fat' cells (the PHA). The best thing about PHA, according to filament retailer Colorfabb, is that microorganisms can eat it again at the end of a product's lifetime.
Collaborators:
Worms, microorganisms
Method:
3D-print the complete file generated in *Experiment 2* using a bioplastic biodegradable filament. Build a **compost** box to create a home for my fermenting image trash, **compost** worms and organic material. Add leftover fruit and vegetables to stimulate the breakdown and **composting** of the 3D print.
Duration:
13 months
Output:
Compost for my plants.
Size of output:
Unknown (organic material)

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS

The 3D printing material is made through fermentation. It is then given shape by the image trash and will, finally, be decomposed by fermentation. It feels satisfying that my image trash is now destined to rot, to be transformed into a nutrient-rich fertiliser that will feed soil and living ground.

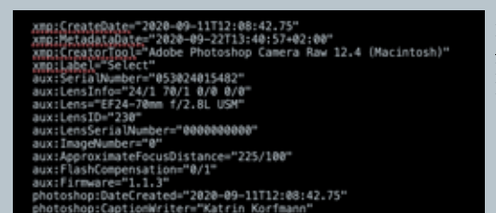
My attempt to delete my files has metamorphosed into its own act of metamorphosis.



Experiment 1, *Collaborating with Image Ruins*, documentation of the process applying the Photoshop command Auto-Blend Layers to 467 RAW photographic image trash files, by Katrin Korfmann, 2022.

Experiment 4, *Collaborating with Image Ruins*, inputting output from experiment 1 (535.9 MB PSD file reduced to 2.2 MB JPEG) and processing it with the browser-based machine-learning framework GauGAN, by Katrin Korfmann, 2022.

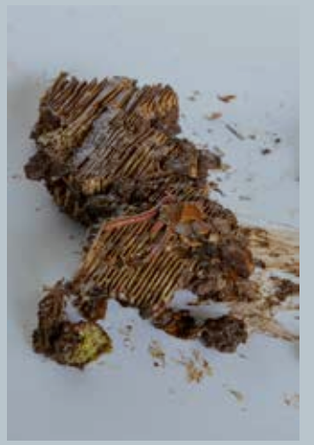
Experiment 3, *Collaborating with Image Ruins*, 4 x 2 x 3 cm 3D print made of data from Experiment 2 and printed with biodegradable white Growlay microcapillary filament, planting seeds on the filament to stimulate the growth and decay process, by Katrin Korfmann, 2022.



Experiment 5, *Collaborating with Image Ruins*, visualisation of the code in 467 RAW image trash files, (detail image) by Katrin Korfmann, 2022.

Fast Fashion, image of a textile waste processing plant, printed on hand-cut archival pigment print made from cotton rag, 280 x 397 cm, by Katrin Korfmann, 2021.

Experiment 9, *Collaborating with Image Ruins*, performing radical deletion, by Katrin Korfmann, 2022.



Experiment 10, *Collaborating with Image Ruins*, image trash rotting through fermentation and supported by worms, by Katrin Korfmann, 2023.

Experiment 10, *Collaborating with Image Ruins*, compost box containing 3D-print from Experiment 2 and using biodegradable filament, by Katrin Korfmann, 2022.

Experiment 8, *Collaborating with Image Ruins*, avatar giving voice to image trash code, by Katrin Korfmann, 2022.

Compositioning

From guest speaker, Esmee Geerken

Esmee's Bioplastic Recipe

Using calcite grains salvaged from a water de-hardening process

Alginate mixture:
- 75 gr alginate
- 100 gr glycerine
- 50 gr sunflower oil
- 750 grams calcite grains
- 1000 ml water

Calcium Chloride solution:
- 50 ml calcium chloride
- 500 ml water

Mix alginate with water and glycerine. Mix until smooth and dissolved

Let sit for several hours to allow bubbles to escape

Prep calcium chloride solution. Fill a small spray bottle with it

Prep surfaces / moulds by spraying them with calcium chloride solution

Cast alginate mixture onto the surface / mould. Cast slowly as to avoid any unwanted air bubbles, then spread in a thin film using a wide spatula or by moving the mould around

Pour on the calcite grains

After a few minutes, spray the casted alginate with calcium chloride solution—the material will shrink in both thickness and width

Once cured, rinse or dip alginate cast in water to eliminate any lingering residues

Enjoy!

Drawing

Conversation with former Research Group member, Benjamin Earl (BE)

AT So, the weather satellite is a co-creator, in making an image with you?

BE Yeah, as the weather satellite passes over the surface of the Earth it broadcasts the data at the same time as it scans it. It travels an elliptical orbit around the Earth every 100 minutes, and it's recording and transmitting the data for each of these passes. And the antenna I use is directional, so it means that if the satellite is rising over here and setting over there, you need to follow it across the sky with your arm. And also, because it's radio, analogue—not just a digital signal which would be on or off—it means that noise is introduced into the image when the signal isn't strong. So, if your arm gets tired and you drop your arm, you introduce noise into the image that you're going to be creating. Your body, then, becomes a part of the image you are capturing. And also if there's a big building nearby, as the satellite passes across the sky, and it goes behind the building, there'll be a strip of noise on the image. I find this interesting—that a satellite image also contains residue of the very local environment, including your own body.

Drifting

Message from Louis Braddock Clarke

Down the Delftse Vliet, Friday 7 Oct.

MEETING INFO: Morning listening session, on a dinghy, following the canal waterway from Den Haag to Delft. Exploring plural ways of listening to a site of research. Finding methods to collaborate with this body of water and its materials.

Does the waterway have a sonic signature? How does the weather affect our listening experience?

10:00 Meet at Maakhaven (Water side)
1e Lulofsdwarsstr. 60, Den Haag (Station Den Haag Holland Spoor).

12:30 Delft Lunch
Martha will meet the group with sandwiches from Lebkov

Get your own coffee on the way

13:00 Radius.
Tour with Sergi Pera Rusca and visit exhibition

14:00 Research Group discussion and collective writing in Water Tower

17:00 Sail from Delft to Hague

BRING: Waterproofs – coat, umbrella, practical footwear – boots, hiking shoes, warm accessories – gloves, scarves, headphones, physical notebooks

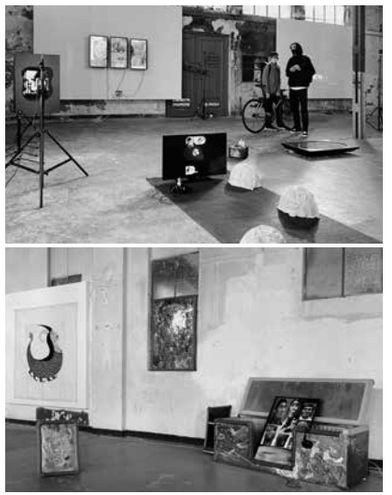
We will be traveling by open boat and on the water for 2 hours. I'd highly recommended warm clothing and extra layers as it could get cold (wind).

KATRIN KORFMANN

IMAGES IN LIMBO: 'COMPOSITIONING'[12] PHOTOGRAPHIC RUBBLE IN THE 'CLIMATIC REGIME'[13]

Photography today is much less about a single image or a single moment in time. Rather it is a 'mass image', or a continuum of networked images and moments that are continually altered and edited, processed, transformed—and abandoned.[14]

Everyone who creates images also creates image debris—the digital detritus left over, or discarded or just not in use, during the processing of images. Through our increasing deployment of multiple captures, bursts, post-production edits, our prolific sharing and our reliance on more and more machines that capture and communicate through photographs, the photographic image exists in a state of continual flux.[15] Photography has become a form of visual capital, a 'social currency, more ubiquitous than ever, but most valuable in its aggregations'.[16] The quality of cameras on our smartphones is continually improving. Alongside this, the volume of data our images create increases. We now have the possibility of scanning the world around us at any moment. I only exist—our contemporary condition seems to say—because I can capture, archive, and share my experience in the form of a photograph. In turn, this image becomes a component of memory and the glue for writing and building our virtual world.[17] But whereas memories can be forgotten, image data is burned onto hard disks and stored in infinitely growing mega data centres—so-called 'hyperscalers'—branded as fluffy, intangible 'virtual clouds'.[18]



You Shall be Spam, exhibition of third-year Graphic Design students' work—outcomes of a course taught by Hannes Bernard and Katrin Korfmann—Maakhaven, the Hague, 2021. Image by Katrin Korfmann.

As a professional photographer, I am especially aware of downloading and storing photographic data . My computer hard drive regularly fills up with many terabytes worth of images, RAW files that don't end up in my final compositions. I save them because they could potentially be used as the ingredients for something else. So, I wondered: what is this material that hangs in limbo between trash and not-yet-trash? What can I, as an artist, do with it?

My research addresses the ever-increasing amount of photographic waste that exists in the world. Can deletion become an artistic method, and if yes, what is the best way to go about achieving that? And, how can my process of experimentation along the road to deletion contribute to a better understanding of the proliferation of digital images, their processing, digital waste and means of disposal?

12. Bruno Latour, 'Steps Toward the Writing of a Compositionist Manifesto', in *New Literary History* 41, 2010, 417-490.

13. Bruno Latour, *Down to Earth, Politics in the New Climatic Regime* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018), 10.

14. Jussi Parikka and Tomáš Dvořák, *Photography Off the Scale, Technologies and Theories of the Mass Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 217.

15. Benjamin Bratton, quoted in Jussi Parikka and Tomáš Dvořák, *Photography Off the Scale, Technologies and Theories of the Mass Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 217.

16. Daniel Palmer, 'Lights, Camera, Algorithm: Digital Photography's Algorithmic Conditions,' in *Digital Light*, eds. Sean Cubitt, Daniel Palmer, and Nate Tkacz (London: Open Humanities Press, 2015), 159.

17. Trevor Paglan, 'Invisible Images (Your Pictures Are Looking at You)', *The New Inquiry*, 8 December, 2016.

18. Marc Hijink, 'Wij hadden niet zo geheimzinnig moeten doen', *NRC*, October 17, 2021.

I engage with these questions as a photographer, researcher and educator. I not only look closely at, and experiment with, my own photographic image data and the massive amount of images I have created, but I also research and exchange with students and colleagues. Topics include photo waste, metamorphosis of photographic data, image data overload, picture afterlife, fear of (photo data) loss, photographic data deletion and the experience of memory through pictures versus memory through experience.

Wastescapes, exhibition view Katrin Korfmann, Project Research Group 2020. Image by Katrin Korfmann.

Fellow research group member Hannes Bernard and I designed a semester-long course for third-year KABK graphic design students. The brief was to research, reuse and transform their own image waste and digital debris and to develop critical reflections, novel methods, formats and narratives around these. Students worked with their forgotten pictures, embedded metadata and hidden data, exploring how they synchronised and bounced between devices and servers across unknown geographies while accumulating increasingly more detailed patterns of behaviours. We assembled their work in an exhibition titled 'You Shall be Spam', held at Maakhaven, The Hague, and documented it on a website.[19]

Students were surprised to discover how many photo traces they could reactivate—pictures they had forgotten and didn't know still existed. The course raised awareness about how the physical resources necessary for the creation, processing and storage of digital images render them much 'heavier' than we imagine. The students, however, then faced similar dilemmas to me: as soon as you reactivate the salvaged photo material and create something new from it, you end up producing even more photographs and waste. One student, Charlotte van Alfen, who considered herself a photo hoarder, decided to go on a 'photo diet' and, for her project, reflected on the experience.

On the other course I teach, 'Post Photography', at the KABK as part of the Master Non Linear Narrative, I invited Risk Hazekamp, a visual artist, researcher and educator, to introduce our students to bio-based photo printing techniques. Un-fixed, bio-based photo prints can disappear over time and exposure to sunlight. Students were very interested in this way of working and developing pictures. The slow processes of unknowing, and the experimental approach felt liberating. We explored image loss, and disappearance, and its conceptual potential for an artwork, as well as an antidote to the unlimited growth of image data. The course raised awareness about the number of images that creators take, share, and process, while also encouraging a discussion about the quality of photographs in relation to quantity and the impact this has on the environment, storytelling, and memory.

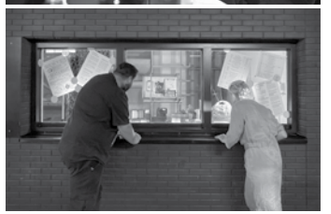
19. The title of the exhibition is from Hito Steyerl, *Duty Free Art: Art in the Age of Planetary Civil War* (London: Verso, 2019), 110.

FRAGMENTS FROM A CONVERSATION BETWEEN KATRIN KORFMANN (KK) AND ANNET DEKKER (AD) IN AMSTERDAM, 10 SEPTEMBER, 2021

Annet Dekker is Assistant Professor of Media Studies: Archival and Information Studies at the University of Amsterdam and co-director at the Centre for the Study of the Networked Image at London South Bank University.

KK Big tech companies make deletion very difficult. They're keeping all these images. We could see this in a course Hannes Bernard and I taught at the BA Graphic Design: 'You Shall be Spam'. Students could still scrape their images from apps they don't even use anymore—images they uploaded 10, 15 years ago. The students had no idea that these images still exist, that they still float somewhere. We realised it's hard work for us, as users, to actually delete our images. To erase our digital images and traces. I wonder: why do these companies make the deletion of images so difficult? Why do they want to keep all these images? Are these images capital for machine learning? Do they think

Deep Futures Research Group visiting Hortus Botanicus Amsterdam with Victoria Meniakina, 2024. Image by Alice Twemlow.



Giulietta Pastorino Verastegui, Lulu van Dijk and Luna van Schadewijk during the roundtable discussion between Deep Futures Research Group and guests at 'Fault Lines: KABK Research Forum 2023'. Image by Silvia Ulloa.

Looking in at the 'Source Material' exhibit in the Deep Futures Research Group room at KABK, 2021. Image by Katrin Korfmann.

Stills from *Kali Waal*, short experimental documentary, by Jasper Coppes, 1:2.35, 4K DCP, 2024. Images courtesy of Jasper Coppes.

Deep Futures Research Group editorial meeting at Katrin Korfmann's studio, De 1800 Roeden, Amsterdam, 2024. Image by Alice Twemlow.

Deep Futures Research Group listening to the sonic signature of the Delftse Vliet waterway, with Louis Braddock Clarke 2022. Image by Alice Twemlow.

Deep Futures Research Group writing together, De Pijp, Amsterdam, 2022. Image by Alice Twemlow.

The Long Now, 4-channel AI generated opera by Hannes Bernard (installation view), ISO, Amsterdam, 8 December, 2020. Image by Hannes Bernard.

KABK + DESIGN LECTORATE + DEEP FUTURES RESEARCH GROUP

The Royal Academy of Art (KABK) The Hague is an art and design academy which offers programs at both bachelors and masters levels, and is part of the University of the Arts the Hague (HdK). Research is integral to KABK's identity and learning culture, with an emphasis on research conducted in, and by means of, an artist's or designer's practice. The skills and methods to enable such research are taught within the study programmes. Research is also conducted by tutors in the context of research groups organised by the lectorates.

The Design Lectorate (2017–) is centred on the 'Deep Futures' research project, headed by Dr Alice Twemlow. Situated at the intersection of environmental humanities, design history and creative practice research, the project explores art and design in relation to alternative timescales such as geological deep time and indigenous cosmologies, as well as values and practices that gather around repair, rest, and care. In addition to its investigation into topics such as space debris, digital waste, and plastiglomerate, the project seeks to generate climate justice imaginaries toward more equitable deep futures.

The lectorate provides a framework for practitioner-researchers who teach at KABK to join the Deep Futures Research Group and develop individual inquiries supported by collective work. Research-in-progress is shared in conversation with peers, students and international guests in the annual academy wide event 'Fault Lines: KABK Research Forum' and further disseminated in a variety of formats such as radio broadcasts, online platforms, exhibitions, and publications.

lectoratedesign.kabk.nl

Wastescapes, image of a metal waste processing plant, lasercut sublimation print on aluminium, 138 x 110 cm, by Katrin Korfmann, 2020.

by vocation. Better known by her moniker Hélène Smith, she enthralled her audiences in Geneva with candlelit spiritual performances at the turn of the last century.

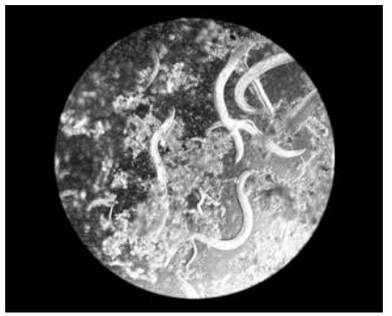
Through painting and weaving, Carl Johan asks: is it possible to speak with someone and on behalf of another through a kinship felt across history? This question has taken him, as a resident artist, to the International Artists Studio Program in Stockholm (IASPIS); Künstlerhaus Bethanien; Hordaland Kunstsenter; La Cité internationale des arts; and Grazer Kunstverein.

Carl Johan's work has been exhibited at Palais de Tokyo, Grazer Kunstverein, Salzburger Kunstverein, Tallinna Kunstihoone and Bonniers konsthall. He has been awarded the De Koninklijke Prijs voor Vrije Schilderkunst (Royal Award for Modern Painting), and has received several grants from Mondriaan Fonds, Amsterdam Fonds voor de Kunst and Konstnärsnämnden. Recently, he contributed an essay on spirit rapping to the book *Listening: A Research Method in Art & Design*, edited by Alice Twemlow and published by KABK (2024).

Carl Johan studied at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie and De Ateliers in Amsterdam. Along with Antoinette Vonder Mühll, he heads the BA Fine Arts at KABK, where he also teaches critical theory and writing.

carljohanhogberg.com

KATRIN KORFMANN



Wastescapes, 2020-21
Collaborating with Image Ruins, 2021-22

Every day, millions of photographic images are produced, shared, ignored, discarded and forgotten. In this first phase of research, I explored the relationship between how waste is sorted, how photographs are edited, and how the visual, conceptual and technical aspects of photography might be used to critically reflect on the 'Wasteocene'.[4] My research took me into the field, to waste processing plants including plastic, glass, clothing, appliances, metal and wheels recycling plants; and also deeper into my own studio practice, where I experimented with juxtaposing and entangling waste processing procedures with different approaches to image production, editing and storage.

As Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing states, 'staying alive—for every species—requires livable collaborations. Collaboration means working across difference, which leads to contamination. Without collaboration we all die'.[5] In the second phase of my research I used the image trash produced in 'Wastescapes' as the basis for a series of iterative multimedia experiments in which I probed deletion as a concept and an action and the materiality of image data. Through material research and transforming the digital photographic data into something other than a photograph but still photographic, I wanted to create imaginaries about what else a photographic image can be.

4. Marco Armiero, 'Welcome to the Wasteocene', 2018, Kunsthall Trondheim.

5. Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World, On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 28.

The body of research stemmed from two questions:

How can concepts that evolve from proposals for living in the 'Climatic Regime',[6] such as 'contamination as collaboration'[7], 'going closer to what distracts you'[8] and 'metamorphosis',[9] help me to develop my artistic methods to scrutinise and process my own photographic image debris?

How can I, as an artist, use these methods to animate, materialise, translate and transform my digital photo debris into something *photographic* that contributes to a clearer artistic positioning and understanding of the current, unfixed and transformative state of photography in the 'Climatic Regime'?

To answer these questions, and to generate knowledge about authorship and ownership in relation to photographic image debris, I worked with a specific set of 467 RAW photographs left over from 'Fast Fashion, Wastescapes 2021'. In my attempts to reactivate, rematerialise, reuse and reanimate, this image debris, I deployed a set of experiments in which I collaborated with computers, human and more-than-human organisms. These experiments focused on translating, assembling, composing, transforming, analysing and altering the image waste.

In developing an ecosystem of experiments—little waste processing plants that metabolise my image debris—I acknowledged the shifting shapes and metamorphoses that occur in the process of image conversion. I considered failure as a possible companion; along the way, I embraced glitches, graininess and unexpected outcomes while antagonising the algorithmic laws of averaging,[10] that flattens unexpected visual voices. On a meta-level, this set of improvisations forms a deep collage of image failures; unwanted images that, nonetheless, still exist and can be freed by means of artistic methodologies.

I used the concept of 'compositionism', described by Bruno Latour as comprising all the meanings of the word, such as composition but also decomposition, compost, compromise, and even failure, to develop a set of techniques for making.[11] Inspired by what Heather Davis and others refer to as 'queer kin', and her invitation to 'go closer to what distracts you',[12] I followed both my irritation with, and affection for, the image debris I have created. In doing so, it became possible to conceive of this debris-processing as object, method and concept at the same time.

Key terms and concepts: Virtual photography, image ruins, Wasteocene, recycling processing plants, collaborating, compositionism, experimentation, materiality of image data.

6. Bruno Latour, *Down to Earth, Politics in the New Climatic Regime*, transl. Catherine Porter, (New York: Polity Press: 2018), 27.

7. Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World, On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 28.

8. Heather Davis, 'The Queer Futurity of Plastic', Mutation Lecture Series, Akademie Schloss Solitude, 2021.

9. Emanuele Coccia, *Metamorphosis*, (New York: Polity Press, 2021).

10. Katrin Korfmann, 'Fast Fashion, Wastescapes', 2021.

11. Daniel Palmer, 'Lights, Camera, Algorithm: Digital Photography's Algorithmic Conditions' in Sean Cubitt, Daniel Palmer & Nate Tkacz (eds.), *Digital Light*, (London: Fibreculture Book Series, Open Humanities Press, 2015), 159.

12 Bruno Latour, 'Steps Toward the Writing of a Compositionist Manifesto', originally printed in *New Literary History*, 41, 2010, 417-490.

Senior tutor, Image, BA Graphic Design
Senior tutor, Post Photography, Master Non Linear Narrative
Member, Design Lectorate Research Group: 2020, 2021, 2024

Katrin Korfmann is a photographic artist, researcher, and educator who grew up in Berlin. She graduated with a degree in photography from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam and was a resident artist at the Rijksakademie Amsterdam. Since 2024, Katrin has been a PhD candidate at Leiden University and KABK, performing research in and through artistic practice.

Rooted in photographic practice, Katrin's work employs images and installations as a means of exploring the potentials, promises, limitations, and perspectives inherent in the medium of photography.

A FRAY OF MESSAYS
Unraveling Research Toward the Deep Future

THIS BOOK IS WRITTEN / EDITED / MESSAYED BY
Alice Twemlow

with

KABK DEEP FUTURES RESEARCH GROUP MEMBERS
Hannes Bernard
Louis Braddock Clarke
Jasper Coppes
Alexander Cromer
Carl Johan Högberg
Katrin Korfmann
Victoria Meniakina

CONTRIBUTORS
Charlotte van Alfen, alumna, KABK BA Graphic Design
Elisa Cuesta Fernández, alumna, KABK MA Artistic Research
Annet Dekker, assistant professor, University of Amsterdam
Jeff Diamanti, associate professor, University of Amsterdam
Benjamin Earl, member, Deep Futures Research Group, 2022-23
Esmee Geerken, artist and Earth scientist
Rana Ghavami, member, Deep Futures Research Group, 2022-23
Aditi Jaganathan, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion consultant
Vibeke Mascini, member, Deep Futures Research Group, 2021-23
Sissel Marie Tonn, multi-disciplinary artist

COPY EDITOR
Lara Chapman

PUBLISHER / DISTRIBUTOR
Royal Academy of Art (KABK) The Hague
Prinsessegracht 4
2514 AN, The Hague
kabk.nl

with

Metropolis M Books
Doelenstraat 30
3512 XJ, Utrecht
metropolism.com

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Bart de Baets

PRINTING AND BINDING
Wilco Art Books

EDITION
3,000

TYPEFACES
CMU Sans Serif
Synchro (Out of the Dark)

PAPER
Recystar
Arena White Rough

COVER IMAGE
Jasper Coppes

Royal Academy of Art
The Hague

Lectorate
Design

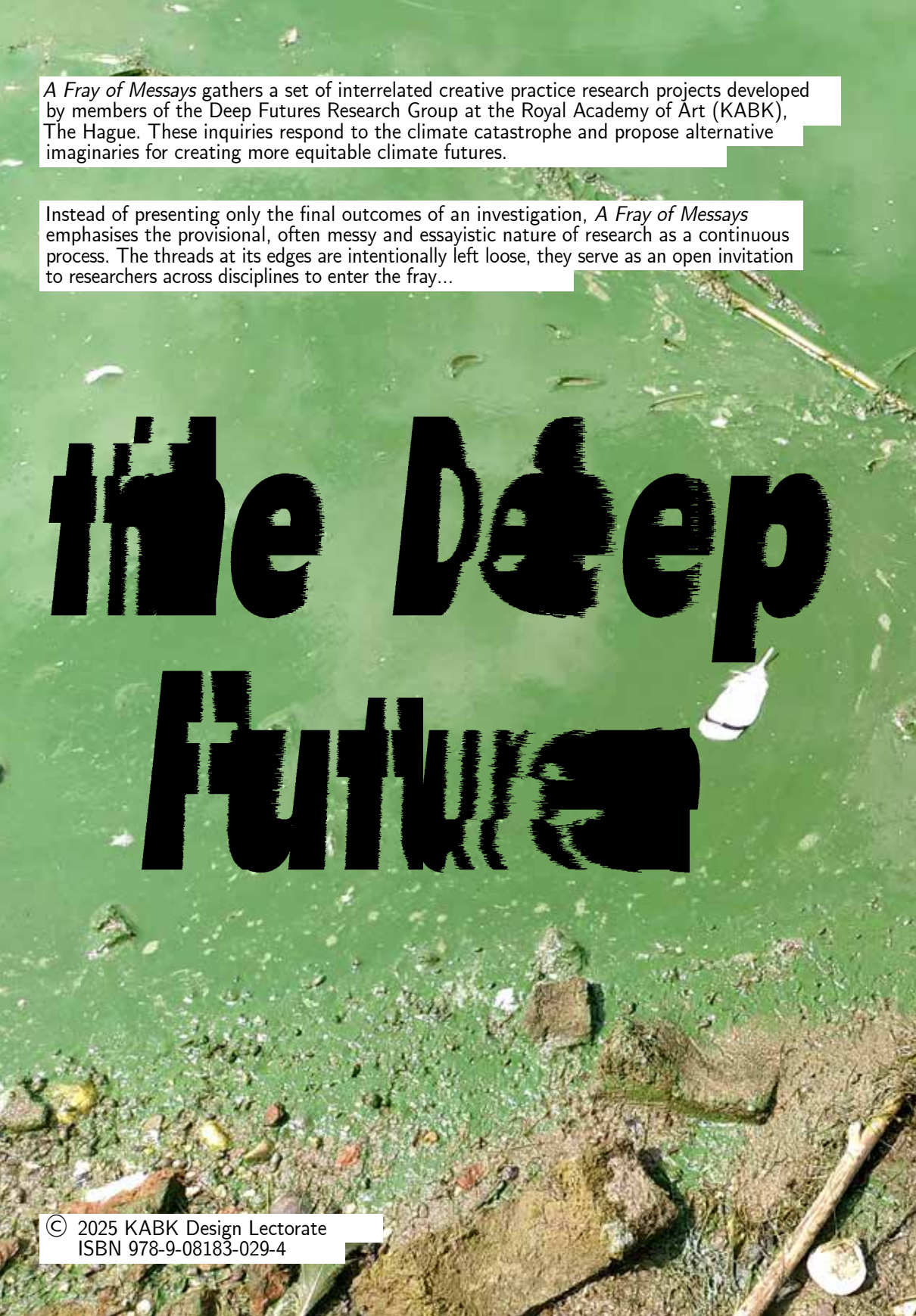
Royal Academy of Art
The Hague

The Deep Futures Research Group would like to thank everyone who informed our thinking and making, and helped bring this book into being, especially:
Dani Admiss, Leah Armstrong, Lulu van Dijk, Farah Fayyad, Fiona Hallinan, Cynthia Hathaway, Martha Jager, Ritvik Khushu, Jonathan Looman, Giulietta Pastorino Verastegui, Mushroom Radio, Myles Merckel, Metropolis M, Natalia Nikoniuk, Anni Nöps, Ada Popowicz, Jara Rocha, Luna van Schadewijk, Vera van de Seyp, Anke Sondi Rumohr, Giath Taha, Rolando Vázquez, Dominik Vrabič Dežman, Bo Wielders

All of our students and colleagues in the KABK learning and research community

For hosting some of our peripatetic meetings, thanks to:
Framer Framed, Hortus Botanicus Amsterdam, Offprint Paris 2024, OT301, Perdu, Radius CCA, De 1800 Roeden, Roma Publications / Enter Enter, University of Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Study, Varia, West Den Haag

ISBN 978-9-08183-029-4
Printed and bound in the Netherlands, 2025



A Fray of Messays gathers a set of interrelated creative practice research projects developed by members of the Deep Futures Research Group at the Royal Academy of Art (KABK), The Hague. These inquiries respond to the climate catastrophe and propose alternative imaginaries for creating more equitable climate futures.

Instead of presenting only the final outcomes of an investigation, *A Fray of Messays* emphasises the provisional, often messy and essayistic nature of research as a continuous process. The threads at its edges are intentionally left loose, they serve as an open invitation to researchers across disciplines to enter the fray...

the Deep Future

ISBN 978-9-08183-029-4