

# ART / EARTH – JÖKLAMINNI

*work in progress / exhibition*

---

*Art / Earth – Jökla minni* is a transdisciplinary art-science project initiated by Stray Light / Kevin Trappeniers and curated by Nicolas Baeyens and Þórunna Dögg Björnsdóttir. The project brings artists and scientists together to explore how we relate to a planet in motion. Taking glaciers as its point of departure, it connects scientific knowledge with artistic engagement with landscapes that are visibly changing and disappearing. Glaciers make planetary transformation tangible: local movements of ice and water are closely linked to global processes, such as rising sea levels and shifting ecosystems, which also affect low-lying regions like Belgium and the Netherlands.

The project unfolds through a reciprocal residency structure. In February 2026, Belgian artists Mattias De Craene, Stijn Demeulenaere, Kevin Trappeniers and curator Nicolas Baeyens travelled to SÍM Residency in Reykjavík, where they undertook fieldwork in Icelandic glacier landscapes alongside glaciologists from the University of Iceland. From early March to early April, Icelandic artists - Julie Sjöfn Gasiglia, Vala Sigbrúðar Jónsdóttir, Sigrún Gyða Sveinsdóttir and curator Þórunna Dögg Björnsdóttir - came to C-TAKT in Pelt, Belgium, developing new work and research in dialogue with scientists and fellow artists. During their stay, the Icelandic artists also explored the landscapes along the Dommel and the IJzer — rivers shaped by centuries of human intervention, drought and seasonal flooding. Dutch artist Nick Steur initiated a Maas River expedition, guiding them through the waterways marking the border between Belgium and the Netherlands — a landscape of flooding, drought, and ecological negotiation.

These exchanges are deeply embedded in scientific research. Field measurements gathered during glacier expeditions feed into the project alongside the artists' findings, including data from ICELINK (Advancing Knowledge of North Atlantic Land Ice Linking Observations and Models), a European research project studying the impact of climate change on glaciers in Iceland and Greenland. The Belgian residency was accompanied by meetings with researchers from De Jonge Academie and the Royal Academy for Science and the Arts of Belgium, as well as participation in the Belgian Science for Climate Action conference. Around twenty-five researchers affiliated with De Jonge Academie will write short essays inspired by these observations.

In May 2026, artists and scientists gather at BAC ART LAB in Leuven for a public exchange. The works on view are works in progress, an intermediate moment in an ongoing artistic and scientific conversation. Later this year, the project will be featured in EOS Science Magazine. The residencies form the first step towards a larger collaborative project between the participating artists and scientists.

---

## **PUBLIC EVENT — 13 MAY 2026**

On 13 May, a couple of the artists and researchers from De Jonge Academie meet at BAC ART LAB for a public exchange. Expect a presentation of the works, and a panel discussion moderated by science journalist Ilse Boeren (EOS Science Magazine). 2 pm – 4 pm. Free admission, registration required.

*Register at: [jongeacademie.be/project/art-earth](https://jongeacademie.be/project/art-earth)*

---

*This exhibition is part of the celebration of BAC Art Lab's 10th anniversary and is presented within a larger jubilee programme. Kevin Trappeniers is artist-in-residence at BAC ART LAB.*

## ARTISTS

**NICOLAS BAEYENS** (BE, b. 1980)**Work:** *Melting Apertures*

Nicolas Baeyens is a visual artist, lecturer and coordinator of sculpture at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp. His practice centres on monumental steel sculptures that he continuously transforms and redistributes. Sculpture is approached not as a fixed object but as a process-based entity - a temporary manifestation in which stability, visibility and status are explicitly called into question. His work operates at the intersection of materiality and memory. Baeyens also serves as co-curator of *Art / Earth — Jöklaminni*.

In Leuven, Baeyens presents two manual micro-recordings made on the Vatnajökull glacier. The scale resists verification — much like the contradictions of our ecological crisis elude certainty. What appears static pulses gently: images simultaneously fragile and alive. Small changes carry the potential for great consequences, yet remain largely beyond our grasp.

**STIJN DEMEULENAERE** (BE)**Work:** *Untitled*

Stijn Demeulenaere is a sound artist, field recordist and musician whose work explores listening as an experience; how sound is perceived and connected to identity, space and imagination. Through field recordings, installations and soundscapes, he investigates social structures, personal narratives and the sonic qualities of places. His work has been presented internationally at venues including Kaaitheater, STUK, Reina Sofía Museum, São Paulo Biennial and Bozar. Since 2014 he has been an associated artist at Kunstenwerkplaats Brussels.

Walking the Breiðamerkurjökull, Demeulenaere came face to face with a glacier as a body of memories — existing on a timescale far beyond our own. For the exhibition he collapses these timescales: during a recording trip, a massive calving caught him off guard, a moment that felt endless, yet lasted only 33 seconds on tape. He stretched those 33 seconds to half an hour: a ghostly structure of sine waves and white noise, paired with a full night of eerie silence punctuated by the glacier's own sounds: ice cracking, rocks falling, mysterious gurgles from the edge of this sleeping giant.

**MATTIAS DE CRAENE** (BE, b. 1989)**Work:** *Untitled*

Mattias De Craene is a saxophonist, composer and producer working at the crossroads of jazz, electronic music, film and sound art. Repetition, texture and stillness are central to his practice. He is a core member of Nordmann and the driving force behind MDCIII, a ritualistic, trance-oriented project. He studied at LUCA School of Arts and has collaborated with artists including Sylvie Kreusch and Jan Bang. In 2017 he co-directed the short film *Dvalemodus* with Bieke Depoorter, which premiered at MoMA. He released the album *Patterns For (A) Film* (2022) and recently collaborated with Moroccan trance trio Black Koyo on a new album (2026).

In the work De Craene developed, Iceland appears as an accumulation of contradictions. Photographic images form a wall that suggests harmony, while beneath the surface acceleration and loss unfold. The landscape feels sublime and unreal; the transformation is radical. What is brutal is shown gently.

**JULIE SJÖFN GASIGLIA** (IS/FR, b. 1990)**Work:** *Portrait of a Mother*

Julie Sjöfn Gasiglia is a multidisciplinary artist based in Iceland whose practice explores the relationships between humans and the more-than-human world, and ecosystems around us and within our own bodies. Working across sculpture, installation, sound, video and photography, she creates spatial and embodied experiences. She holds an MFA from the Iceland University of the Arts, where she also manages the photography lab. In 2026, she was nominated for the Motivational Award by the Icelandic Art Centre. Her research focuses on interconnectedness, the study of systems, and (re-)establishing relationships with the living world.

During her residency, Gasiglia followed the Dommel river as a guide through an unfamiliar landscape. Drawn in by the topography of wetlands, marshy forests, and their inhabitants, she embarked on a journey on foot along the riverbank. Through this slow exploration, she built an embodied knowledge of the local landscape. Her installation, made of steel, video and sound, draws from recordings made on those walks. A meditation on what it means to recreate the experience of building a relationship with a place, an ecosystem, a river, and ultimately on the impossibility of doing so.

**VALA SIGPRÚÐAR JÓNSDÓTTIR** (IS, b. 1993)**Work:** *To Beaver*

Vala Sigprúðar Jónsdóttir lives and makes art in Reykjavík. Her work deals with the making and unmaking of textile and the relationship between textiles, human environments and systems. Spinning, cultivating mycelium and weaving are central to her practice, where she addresses themes of regeneration, uncertainty, contamination and tension. Vala holds a BA from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie and an MA from the Iceland University of the Arts.

Vala used her time at C-TAKT to look for, observe and research beaver dams after becoming fascinated by their craftsmanship. Beavers are both a challenge to human expectations of landscape and a keystone species that can prevent droughts and floods. In a way, they seem to be able to prevent catastrophes by creating a little chaos. This tension between naturally occurring chaos and manmade climate catastrophe stuck with Vala, and inspired the woven text which is her contribution to the exhibition.

**SIGRÚN GYÐA SVEINSDÓTTIR** (IS, b. 1993)**Work:** *This Epic Disappointment*

Sigrún Gyða Sveinsdóttir is a visual artist, classical singer and composer based in Amsterdam. Her work straddles performance and classical opera composition, engaging themes of collectivity, ecological crisis, systematic control and the emotional structures that bind groups together. She holds an MA in Moving Image from the Sandberg Instituut in Amsterdam and has been active in numerous performance and opera projects in Reykjavík and Amsterdam.

The residency at C-TAKT gave Sveinsdóttir something unexpected: hope. *This Epic Disappointment* is a multichannel video installation, a river of images, sound and voice travelling through a choir of bodies resembling moving water. She recorded the sounds of the Maas for days. What melts in one place arrives as a wave somewhere else; droughts, floods, coastlines that did not expect to become coastlines.

**NICK STEUR** (NL, b. 1982)**Work:** *Found & Lost & Found:*

*BLUR* (driftwood, foam, plastic)

*A FLOAT* (driftwood, foam)

**please do touch, but with care**

Nick Steur is a Dutch artist working from Brussels, associated with SoAP Maastricht. Working primarily with stone, he creates installations and performances that are often site-specific and durational in nature. His work has been shown at MHKA, Middelheim, Bozar and Kanal Centre Pompidou, and at international festivals including Spring Utrecht, Lift London, Adelaide Festival and Edinburgh Fringe. He graduated in 2011 from the Institute for Performative Arts Maastricht. For *Art / Earth – Jöklaminni*, he initiated the Maas River expedition through which the Icelandic artists explored the waterways, marking the border between Belgium and the Netherlands.

Steur on *Found & Lost & Found*: “When we float we blur. Blurring with all that is afloat -a drift- we merge and disperse, become the other, we inherit their properties and their folds and cracks, we copy their behaviour and start to think-feel-be alike. We drift until we sink. We erode until we float. The rivers the oceans -glues of time and matter- until also they dry up become deserted. Desert sands be airborne and wonders till landing. Becomes land. This soil. Yet again pressing parts of parts in time to stone. Hard. Harder. Wind and water closing in again... zoom in, zoom out. In. Out. In... Ahhhh. Surrounding sounds wave with the wind. Weaving particles handing them over to sun and water pouring through them understanding little but piercing piercing space through it, through you. me. us. When we float we blur. We blur.”

**KEVIN TRAPPENIERS** (BE, b. 1985)**Work:** *Untitled*

Kevin Trappeniers is a Belgian transdisciplinary artist working at the intersection of visual art, performance and spatial installation. His practice explores the relationship between humans and landscape, approaching ecological transformation through poetic and meditative reflections on time, transience and presence. He creates immersive sensory environments in which space, light, sound and natural elements enter into dialogue. Trappeniers is the initiator of *Art / Earth – Jöklaminni* and is currently artist-in-residence at BAC ART LAB, C-TAKT and Werkplaats Walter.

Trappeniers presents small ice sculptures in dialogue with video work and an hourglass. The sculptures — miniature house-like forms — melt in real time: recognizable structures that slowly surrender to their environment, as opposed to glaciers surrendering to human interference. Like the hourglass, the melting marks the passing of time, not as metaphor but as real event. The visitor becomes a witness to a small-scale durational collapse, sharing the same time and atmosphere as the work and holding the potential to intervene. Each disappearance is both an ending and the beginning of a new loop.

**PÓRANNA DÖGG BJÖRNSDÓTTIR** (IS, b. 1976)**Work:** *Carving Listening Landscapes*

Póranna Dögg Björnsdóttir is a sound and visual artist based in Reykjavík. Trained as a classical pianist, she graduated from the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague and has since developed a practice in the electroacoustic field, working across video, performance, sculpture and sound. She co-curated the art biennale Sequences X: Time Has Come (2020) and is Associate Professor and Programme Director at the Iceland University of the Arts. She co-curates *Art / Earth — Jöklaminni* and also shows her own work.

During the residency, Björnsdóttir developed a daily practice of carving found wood, guided by observation and listening. The branches she collected in Belgium, brought back to Iceland, now hold layered memories: the seasonal renewal of a forest alongside the intrusive sounds of fighter planes overhead. Natural transformation and human conflict, held in wood.

**Some extra reading material** – Nicolas Baeyens curates the Belgian artists, Póranna Dögg Björnsdóttir the Icelandic. Baeyens wrote a text for the earlier presentation of the Belgian artists at SÍM in Reykjavík (Feb '26) — the works developed there are now also on view in Leuven. The Icelandic artists are showing their work here for the first time. You can read Nicolas' text by scanning the QR-code on the right.

**CREDITS & PARTNERS**

**Artists** Mattias De Craene, Stijn Demeulenaere, Julie Sjöfn Gasiglia, Nick Steur, Vala Sigbrúðar Jónsdóttir, Sigrún Gyða Sveinsdóttir, Kevin Trappeniers and curators Nicolas Baeyens & Póranna Dögg Björnsdóttir

**Production** Stray Light vzw

**Production manager** Ilka De Wilde

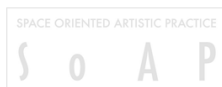
**Partners** SÍM / Samband íslenskra Myndlistarmanna, de Jonge Academie, C-TAKT Transdisciplinary Platform, University of Iceland, SoAP / Space-oriented Artistic Practice, Werkplaats Walter, ICELINK, BAC ART LAB, EOS Science Magazine

**With the support of** the Flemish Government, the city of Leuven

STRAY  
LIGHT



leuven



more Art / Earth - Jöklaminni via [www.kevintrappeniers.be](http://www.kevintrappeniers.be)