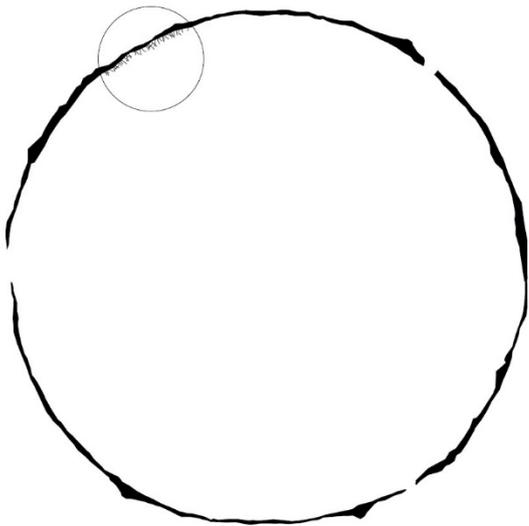


# NaturArchy: Towards a Natural Contract

*“We dominate and appropriate [nature]... Our fundamental relationship with objects comes down to war and property.”  
[Michel Serres, *The Natural Contract*]*

## Curatorial Statement

Trees, forests, rivers, mountains, seas, stardust, DNA — imagine the environment not as the backdrop of our activities, imagine objects of nature not as items to be appropriated or exploited, but as subjects with intrinsic value and full juridical rights. Cancel the tired subject-object dichotomy between person and environment, the obsolete opposition nature and culture that does not hold in view of modern scientific discoveries; do away with conditions of mastery, appropriation, and submission; reimagine human concerns as unreservedly dependent on the natural world, integrated within nature. Only such a shift in our conceptualisation of nature can change our deep relation to the matter, species, ecosystems around us. A real Green Deal requires a systemic change of ground.



Alexandra Arènes, *The Thickness of the Critical Zone at the Planetary Scale, 2019* – in: Bruno Latour & Peter Weibel, *Critical Zones, The Science and Politics of Landing on Earth*, Karlsruhe – Cambridge, MA, 2020

Pushing beyond Rousseau’s social contract, *NatureArchy: Towards a Natural Contract*, calls for a more inclusive and equitable contract with our environment. Establishing a different relation with nature is a prime condition to acquire the necessary attitudes and skills to combat global warming. To limit our tremendous environmental impact. To free nature from the onslaught of human development – do we need to rearticulate her immanent sovereignty and decolonise her into sustainability again? Simply ensure legally enforceable rights to natural entities: and suddenly any decision as to what is the right or wrong action concerning the environment no longer hinges on human concerns. Trees, planets, clouds and roots: we want to explore how the material world matters, develop ways to understand the languages of nature and their legitimacy. Moulds, yeasts, grains, herbs: we also want to deepen our collective awareness on the tremendous legacy of humans in their intercourse with nature.

NaturArchy aims to explore – through artistic, scientific and legal expressions – how providing Nature and its phenomena with a contract that integrates her totally into our society can redefine our anthropocentric relationship with Nature. Intersecting science and law, reason and style, art and judgment, policy and imagination, NaturArchy wants to re-imagine the western relation of human and non-human, in an attempt to ensure juridical persona to Nature’s many wonders, be they stardust or DNA.